



# COLD WEATHER

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## HYPOTHERMIA

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### LAYERING FOR COLD WEATHER

- Underwear, undershirt, and socks
- Cotton or knit shirt – shouldn't be baggy
- Denim or corduroy long pants
- Sweater on top of shirt- slightly more baggy than shirt
- Sheepskin or winter insulated boots
- Overcoat, hat or ear muffs, gloves

### FIRST AID FOR FROSTBITE

- Get out of cold
- Warm your hands by tucking them under your arms. If nose, ears or face, warm area by covering with dry, gloved hands
- Don't rub affected area
- Don't walk on frostbitten feet or toes if possible
- Don't thaw if there's any chance the affected areas will freeze again
- Get emergency medical help

Body temperature is a balance between how much heat is produced and how much is lost with the brain acting as the thermostat. Normal body temperature is around 98.6° F. Hypothermia occurs as the body loses heat faster than it can produce heat, causing a dangerously low body temperature below 95.0° F.

When your body temperature drops, your heart, nervous system and other organs cannot work correctly. Left untreated, hypothermia eventually leads to complete failure of the heart and respiratory system and to death.

The most common causes of hypothermia are exposure to cold weather conditions or cold water. Other conditions leading to hypothermia include:

- Wearing clothes that aren't warm enough for

the weather

- Staying out in cold too long
- Unable to get out of wet clothes or move to a warm, dry location
- Accidental falls in water, as in a boating accident
- Inadequate heating in the home, especially for older people and infants
- Air conditioning that is too cold, especially for older people and infants

Constant shivering is a key sign of hypothermia. Other signs include:

- Loss of ability to reason
- Drowsiness, fatigue
- Irrational, poor judgment
- Loss of ability to reason
- Thickness of speech
- Blueness of skin

- Dilation of pupils
- Decreased heart and respiratory rate
- Stupor

Anyone who appears to have hypothermia should seek immediate medical attention.

First aid care involves:

- Be gentle. Excessive movement may cause cardiac arrest.
- Move the person out of the cold.
- Remove wet clothes
- Cover with blankets
- Insulate the body from the cold ground
- Monitor breathing
- Share body heat
- Provide warm drinks
- **Don't** apply direct extreme heat as it could induce cardiac arrest

Frostbite occurs when tissues freeze. Frostbite can affect any area of the skin and in extreme cold can develop within minutes and even quicker in the case of chemical injuries.

Most people who get frostbite are males aged 30-49 years.

## FROSTBITE

Frostbite comes in three degrees of severity:

- First degree or frost nip has numbed skin that has turned white in color and feels stiff to the touch but the tissue under is warm and soft
- Second degree or superficial frostbite has

- skin that is white or blue and feels hard and frozen. Blistering may occur.
- Third degree or deep frostbite has skin that is white, blotchy and/or blue and the tissue is hard and cold to touch. This is a life threatening injury.