



## COLD WEATHER

Cold weather can be dangerous and you should take precautions to protect yourself from frostbite and hypothermia. Both conditions are caused by excessive exposure to low temperatures, wind or moisture. Young children and the elderly are particularly susceptible to heat loss.

When venturing outside in winter, be sure to:

- Check the temperature and limit your time outdoors if it's very cold, wet or windy.
- Dress warmly and bundle up in several layers of loose clothing.
- Wear mittens rather than gloves, and cover your ears and head with a warm hat.
- Wear socks that will keep your feet warm and dry.
- Keep moving
- Stay hydrated and limit alcohol consumption.

### Frostbite

Frostbite is an injury caused by freezing of the skin and underlying tissues. It's the most common injury resulting from exposure to severe cold, and most often occurs on fingers, toes, nose, ears, cheeks and chin. Exposed skin is most vulnerable to frostbite, however even covered skin can be affected.

**Signs of Frostbite** - include pale grey, waxy textured skin in affected area cold to the touch, numbness and localized pain, swelling and blistering.

**First Aid**- Get out of the cold, remove wet clothing and gently rewarm the affected area. If numbness and pain do not subside, blisters develop, or skin does not return to a normal colour, seek medical attention.

### Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a medical emergency that occurs when your body loses heat faster than it can produce heat, causing a dangerously low body temperature.

When your body temperature drops, your heart, nervous system and other organs can't work normally.



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Hypothermia is often caused by exposure to cold weather or immersion in cold water. Primary treatments for hypothermia are methods to warm the body back to a normal temperature.

***Signs of Hypothermia*** - include confusion, lethargy, weakness, apathy, pale skin colour.

***Treatment*** – If you suspect someone may have hypothermia, seek immediate medical attention by calling 9-1-1. If possible, get the person indoors, remove any wet clothing and wrap them in dry blankets to begin slowly rewarming him or her. If the person is not breathing