

DECEMBER SAFETY BULLETIN

PREVENTING COLD INJURIES

PREVENTION - Plan ahead when working in cold environments by taking these steps:

DRESS IN LAYERS

- When physical exertion is expected- follow the saying “Be Bold, Start Cold” to avoid sweating.
- Synthetic and wool blends are preferred, and provide warmth even when wet.
- Bring extras like gloves and base layers in case they do get wet.

PROTECT YOUR SKIN

- Be able to cover all exposed skin on your face with a buff, balaclava, or scarf.
- Use sunscreen on areas that are in direct sunlight - even on the coldest days, sun rays can damage skin.

STAY HYDRATED | Dehydration increases the potential for hypothermia.

- Drink 3 to 4 liters of water per day.
- Drink fluids with added electrolytes to replenish what is lost in perspiration.

FUEL FOR SUCCESS

- The body generates heat by burning calories.
- Replenish by eating small amounts of food regularly.

COLD INJURY RECOGNITION - Early detection can prevent a potential life threatening condition.

FROST NIP - An early form of Frostbite, characterized by numb or tingly sensation of exposed skin.

- Resolved by rewarming affected area without further care needed.

FROSTBITE - Damage to the skin caused by extreme cold.

- Early signs include cold prickly feeling skin, followed by numbness.
- Appearance of the skin can change from normal to bluish white, grayish yellow, or waxy-looking and be hard to the touch.
- In severe cases, blisters and tissue loss may happen.

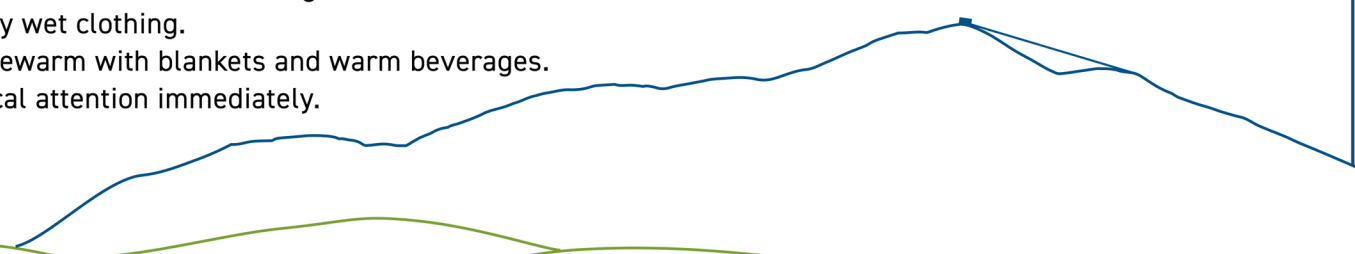
TREATMENT

- Do not rub affected areas, it will only damage skin more.
- Passively rewarm the area (only if you can keep it from refreezing).
- See medical attention to prevent infection.

HYPOTHERMIA - A serious life threatening condition where a body core temperature drops due to prolonged exposure to the cold. Watch out for these signs and symptoms:

- **Mild** | The body will shiver to create heat.
- **Moderate** | Shivering stops, exhaustion, fumbling gate and slurred speech.
- **Severe** | Confusion and irrational behavior, memory loss, and eventually unconsciousness.

TREATMENT

- Get the person into a warm building or shelter.
 - Remove any wet clothing.
 - Passively rewarm with blankets and warm beverages.
 - Seek medical attention immediately.
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