



COLD RELATED EMERGENCIES

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is an abnormally low body temperature resulting from prolonged exposure to cold. Your body loses heat faster than it produces it. Body temperatures that drop too low affect the brain and make it difficult to think clearly or move.

Signs/Symptoms:

Shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, drowsiness.



What should be done:

- DIAL 9-1-1 and seek immediate medical attention.
- Get into a warm room or shelter.
- Remove wet clothing.
- Warm core of the body first.
- Administer warm beverages (not alcohol).
- Keep person dry and warm, including head and neck.
- Person may be unconscious and may not seem to have a pulse or be breathing. Start CPR until victim responds or medical aid becomes available.

Frostbite

Frostbite causes a loss of feeling and color in affected areas (nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers, or toes). Frostbite can permanently damage the body, and severe cases can lead to amputation.

Signs and Symptoms:

Redness or pain in any skin area, a white or grayish/yellow skin area, skin that feels unusually firm or waxy, numbness.



What should be done:

- Get into a warm room as soon as possible.
- Avoid walking on frostbitten feet or toes.
- Immerse the affected area in warm (not hot) water.
- Warm the affected area using body heat.
- Do not rub the frostbitten area with snow or massage it (will cause more damage).
- Do not use a heating pad, lamp, stove, fire, or radiator for warming. Affected areas are numb and can be easily burned.