

# Cold Hard Facts about Cold Injuries



With the cold rapidly moving in the incidence of having a cold injury will be increasing. There are several types of cold injuries, ranging from mild to severe. Cold injuries are preventable if the signs and symptoms are recognized early on and treated accordingly.

## Hypothermia

- What to look for:

○ <b>Early Signs:</b>	○ <b>Later signs</b>
○ Shivering	○ No shivering
○ Fatigue	○ Blueish Skin
○ Confusion and disorientation	○ Slow pulse and breathing
○ Loss of coordination	○ Loss of consciousness

- First Aid
  - Move person into a warm dry place and remove any wet clothes
  - Start rewarming by covering them in warm blankets
  - If no pulse start CPR

## Frost bite

- What to look for:
  - Reduced blood flow to the hands and feet
  - Blueish or pale waxy skin
  - Numbness, tingling, aching

- First aid
  - Immerse affected body part in WARM water (not hot). Do not use heat packs, a fireplace, or radiator for warming.

### HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia often occurs at very cold temperatures, but can occur at cool temperatures (above 40°F), if a person is wet (from rain, sweat or cold water) and becomes chilled.

**Signs & Symptoms**

**Adults:**

- shivering
- exhaustion
- confusion
- fumbling hands
- memory loss
- slurred speech
- drowsiness

**Infants:**

- bright red, cold skin
- very low energy

## Chilblains

- What to look for:
  - Redness and itching
  - Possible blistering
  - Inflammation
- First Aid:
  - Avoid scratching. May use hydrocortisone cream to help with the itching
  - Warm skin slowly and keep blisters covered and clean

## Trench Foot

- What to look for:
  - Reddening of the skin and swelling
  - Blisters and ulcers with possible bleeding under the skin
  - Leg cramps
  - Numbness or tingling pain
- First Aid
  - Remove shoes and wet socks and dry the feet
  - Avoid walking on the feet because this can cause more tissue damage

### How to layer:

**Base:** Thin moisture wicking material

**Middle:** The insulation layer. The amount of insulation needed depends on the temperature.

**Shell:** Wind and water resistant layer. Hats and gloves also help minimize heat loss



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