

FROSTBITE vs HYPOTHERMIA

Extremely cold air comes every winter and affects millions of people across the State of Illinois. The arctic air can be dangerous combined with brisk winds and dangerously cold wind chill values. People exposed to extreme cold are susceptible to frostbite and can succumb to hypothermia in a matter of minutes.

FROSTBITE

- Areas most prone to **frostbite** are uncovered skin and the extremities (hands and feet).
- Signs/Symptoms include loss of feeling and color around the face, fingers, and toes.
 - Treat by going to a warm room.
 - Soaking in warm (not hot) water.
 - Using body heat rather than a heating pad.
 - Or massage to get warm.
 - Slowly warm the affected areas and seek medical help if needed.

HYPOTHERMIA

- **Hypothermia** is an unusually low body temperature and often includes shivering, exhaustion, confusion, fumbling hands, memory loss, slurred speech, or drowsiness. Seek medical attention IMMEDIATELY!
- Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it.
- If hypothermia is suspected, go to a warm room and warm the center of the trunk of the body first, using warm blankets on the whole body (including head) to stay dry and increase core temperature.
- Do NOT give hypothermia victims hot beverages or alcohol.



Tips to Avoid Frostbite/Hypothermia

- Avoid overexertion, such as shoveling heavy snow or walking in deep snow can cause a heart attack for any age.
- Loose fitting, warm clothing worn in layers will insulate better and keep you warmer.
- Keep your feet and hands as dry as possible.
- Stay covered.
- Wear mittens or gloves.
- At least half of your body heat is lost if your head is not covered...so wear a hat.



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