

STAYING SAFE AND WARM IN WINTER



Living in a cold country can be hazardous to your health. Each year in Canada, more than 80 people die from over-exposure to the cold, and many more suffer injuries resulting from hypothermia and frostbite. Wind chill can play a significant role in such health hazards because it speeds up the rate at which your body loses heat.

TIPS FOR COLD WEATHER SAFETY

Dress Warmly

- Dress in layers with a wind-resistant outer layer
- When it is cold, wear a hat, gloves and a scarf
- Wear warm and waterproof footwear
- Cover up exposed areas such as your fingers, cheeks, ears, and nose.
- Bring additional warm clothing for extended periods or in an emergency.

Listen to the Weather Forecast

- Check the weather forecast before going outside
- Listen for a wind chill warning

Be Aware

- Watch for signs of frostnip, frostbite and hypothermia
- Some people, such as children and elders, are more susceptible to the cold.

Seek Shelter

- Get out of the wind and limit the time you spend outdoors.
- Seek shelter from the wind if you are getting cold, even if it is only behind a tree, hill, embankment, or other landscape feature.

Stay Dry

- Wet clothing chills the body rapidly
- Remove outer layers of clothing or open your coat if you are sweating
- If your clothes get wet in the cold, change into dry clothes immediately.

Eat Healthy

- Drink plenty of warm fluids to help your body stay warm and hydrated, and avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- Eat high-calorie food and drinks regularly as the body converts food to energy, which heats the body.

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Exposure to the cold can be hazardous or even life-threatening. Your body's extremities, such as the ears, nose, fingers and toes, lose heat the fastest. Exposed skin may freeze, causing frostnip or frostbite. In extreme conditions or after prolonged exposure to the cold, the body core can also lose heat, resulting in hypothermia

<p>Hypothermia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being cold over a prolonged period can cause a drop in body temperature below the average 37 C • Shivering, confusion and difficulty moving can occur • It can progress to a life-threatening condition where shivering stops or the person loses consciousness. Cardiac arrest may occur. 	<p>What to Do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get medical help immediately. Call 911 • Get the person indoors • Lay the person down and avoid rough handling • Gently remove wet clothing • Warm the person gradually and slowly
<p>Frostnip</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mild form of frostbite where only the skin freezes • Skin appears yellowish or white but soft to the touch • Painful tingling or burning sensation 	<p>What to do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do NOT rub or massage the area • Warm the area gradually, using body heat or warm water. Avoid direct heat • Once the affected area is warm, do not re-expose it to the cold
<p>Frostbite</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A more severe condition where both the skin and the underlying tissues (fat, muscle, bone) are frozen. • Skin appears white, waxy and is hard to the touch • The area is numb, with no sensation 	<p>What to do:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frostbite can be severe and can result in amputation. Get medical help immediately. Call 911. • Do NOT rub or massage the area • Do NOT warm the area until you can ensure it will stay warm • Warm the area gradually, using body heat or warm water. Avoid direct heat