



SEVERE WEATHER SURVIVAL TIPS

How to stay safe during extreme cold when you live outdoors

WHAT WILL YOU DO IN SEVERE WEATHER?

IF YOU ARE OUTDOORS

- Wear several layers of loose-fitting, lightweight, warm clothing instead of just one layer of heavy clothing.
- Wear a warm hat. Up to 50% of your body heat can be lost through an uncovered head.
- Cover your mouth with a scarf to protect your lungs.
- Keep dry.

SLEEP INSIDE AT NIGHT! IF YOU MUST SLEEP OUTDOORS, FOLLOW THESE TIPS

- Find a place to sleep that is out of the wind.
- Wear as much clothing as possible, especially around your core (stomach, back and chest). Make sure your clothing is loose.
- Put something under your sleeping bag to prevent ground moisture from seeping in.
- If your sleeping bag is too big, fill up empty space with extra clothes or newspaper.
- Keep your face outside your sleeping bag so that the moisture from your breathing does not get into the bag. Wear a warm hat and scarf to keep your head and neck warm.
- Avoid drinking a lot of fluid at night, so you won't have to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night.
- If you can, eat a big dinner with lots of calories. Calories are a unit of heat. Keep a snack with you for the middle of the night, so if you do wake up cold, you can replace lost calories.
- Don't drink alcohol. Alcohol slows down your circulation and can cause you to lose body heat, especially in your hands and feet.

REMEMBER

- You can get hypothermia even when it is not very cold. Other aspects of the weather, such as wind and moisture can cause the body to lose heat.
- You have a higher risk of developing hypothermia when you use alcohol, nicotine, street drugs, and some medications.

FIRST AID DURING EXTREME COLD

FROSTBITE

SYMPTOMS

- Skin looks white or greyish-yellow, is very cold, and has a hard or waxy feel
- Skin may also itch, burn, or feel numb
- Deep frostbite can cause blistering or hardening
- As the area thaws, the flesh becomes red and painful

FIRST AID

- If you're outside, warm your frostbitten hands by tucking them into your armpits. Protect your face, nose, or ears by covering the area with dry, gloved hands. Don't rub the affected area and never rub snow on frostbitten skin.
- Get out of the cold. Once you're indoors, remove wet clothes.
- Do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes.
- If there's any chance the affected areas will freeze again, don't thaw them. If they're already thawed, wrap them up so that they don't become frozen again.
- Get emergency medical help. If numbness or pain remains during warming or if blisters develop, seek medical attention.

HYPOTHERMIA (a severe medical emergency)

SYMPTOMS

- Shivering
- Slowed speech
- Slow breathing
- Cold, pale skin
- Loss of coordination
- Tired feeling
- Confusion or memory loss

FIRST AID

- Have someone call 9-1-1. Get to a hospital immediately. Delay can be fatal.
- Ask someone to help you move to a warmer place. Remove wet clothing and cover yourself with dry clothing. Be sure to keep the chest area warm. Do not apply direct heat to the body. Do not rub or massage the body.
- Do not drink alcohol.

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