

Hypothermia: COLD WET WIND KILLER

Core temperature drops below 35°C so normal behaviour, muscle, cerebral and core functions are impaired. Comes on quickly or slowly. Needs to be recognised and treated quickly so does not progress to medical emergency.



CAUSES

- COLD, WET, WINDY conditions combined with inadequate clothing
- Lack of food
- Physical exhaustion and low morale

If left unrecognised and untreated, hypothermia WILL kill. Planning and preparation will minimise the exposure to risks associated with hypothermia.

SIGNS OF HYPOTHERMIA

Watch out for “UMBLES”... stumbles, mumbles, fumbles and grumbles!		
<p>EARLY shivering – mild progressing to violent lethargy/fatigue/apathy nausea & vomiting dizzy spells rapid breathing fast weak pulse Increased urination skin cold to touch, becoming grey muscle stiffness lack of co-ordination mental confusion</p>	<p>SERIOUS drowsy slurred speech disregard for cold increased confusion & Amnesia incoherent/irrational/aggressive behaviour blue lips, ears, fingers (& toes) difficult simple movements of hands and feet - sometimes leading to trips shivering stops</p>	<p>SEVERE MEDICAL EMERGENCY jerky movements collapse hallucinations slowing breathing slowing heart rate, possibly irregular sudden burst of energy paradoxical undressing coma</p>

TREATMENT

- EVERYONE STOP!
- GET casualty into shelter (put up tent, or emergency bag; get warm and dry)
- Once sheltered: add hat and insulate from ground with sleeping mat
- REPLACE WET CLOTHES with dry and warm clothes
- Warm drinks + food for everyone
- Cheer up and check everyone: if one person has hypothermia likely others are close to it
- Do NOT rub to warm up or share bodily warmth
- CALL FOR HELP If condition deteriorates call **999**. Radio, call and text.
- STAY PUT. Do not move casualty. Wait for help.
- Save phone battery. No one to call home or use social media.
- Follow RGS emergency procedure.

AVOID HYPOTHERMIA

WEAR CORRECT CLOTHING FOR THE CONDITIONS. Stay warm and dry: HATS, GLOVES, LAYERS.
EAT PROPERLY: good breakfast, eat + drink all day. Carry snacks/emergency rations.
GET FIT. Do not attempt too much. Be prepared to abandon plans and re-route to lower ground.
STOP and REST if necessary but avoid excessively long stops.
CHECK on group: TALK to people and check they are not showing any of symptoms of hypothermia
Contact staff if you are concerned