

# Cold-Related Stress Toolbox Talk

## Cold-Related Stress

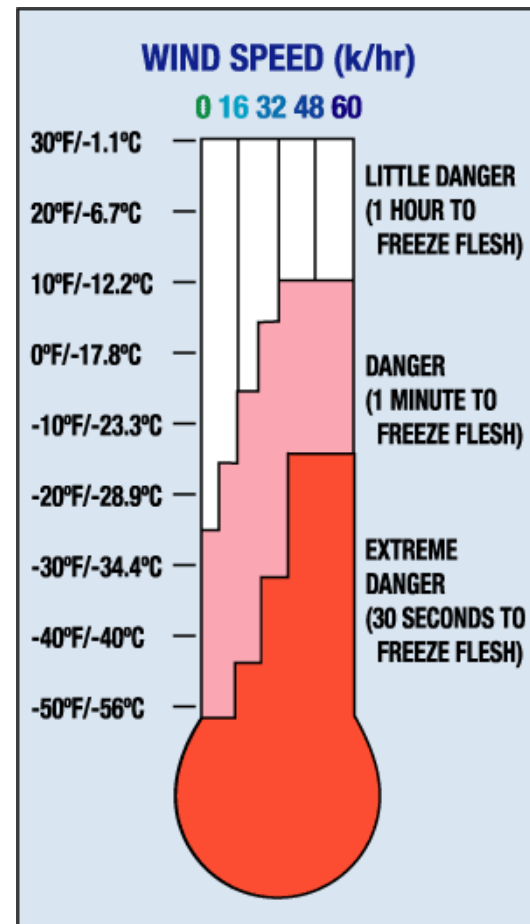
A condition when the body is subjected to low cold temperatures for extended periods of time. It occurs by driving down the skin temperature and eventually the internal body (core) temperature. This can cause permanent tissue damage or death but is preventable.

## Symptoms and First Aid

- **Hypothermia** - Normal body temperature (98.6°F) drops < 95°F
  - **Mild Symptoms:** alert but shivering
    - move to a warm, dry area
  - **Moderate - Severe Symptoms:** shivering stops, confused and disoriented, slurred speech, heart rate/breathing slow, & loss of consciousness & death
    - Call 911 Immediately, move to warm, dry area
    - Remove any wet clothes & cover the body with layers of blankets and a vapor barrier (tarp, garbage bag)
      - DO NOT COVER THE FACE
    - Place warm bottles or hot packs in armpits and sides of chest
- **Frostbite** - Damage to extremities caused by freezing
  - **Symptoms:** reddened skin develops gray/white patches, numbness, feels firm or hard and blisters may form. Occurs on fingers, toes, nose, ears, cheeks and chin.
    - Seek Medical Attention
    - Get to a warm room
    - Do not rub the affected area to warm it
    - Give warm sweetened drinks if person is alert
- **Trench Foot** - prolonged exposure to wet and cold temperatures
  - **Symptoms:** redness of the skin, swelling, numbness and blisters
    - seek medical assistance
    - remove the shoes/boots and wet socks
    - dry the feet
- **Chilblains** - repeat exposure of skin to temperatures just above freezing
  - **Symptoms:** redness, itching, inflammation, possible blistering
    - slowly warm skin
    - avoid scratching
    - use corticosteroid creams to relieve itching and swelling

## Four Factors that lead to Cold-Related Stress:

1. Exposure to cold water
2. Exposure to dampness
3. Exposure to High or cold winds
4. Exposure to Cold temperatures



## Preventing Cold-Related Stress

- Check the temperature and limit your time in cold, wet or windy environments
- Gradually introduce yourself to the cold environment
- Monitor yourself and others
  - learn the signs and symptoms of cold-related stress
- Schedule breaks in warm areas
- Dress appropriately
  - several layers of loose, warm clothing
  - hat or headband that can fully cover ears
  - mittens or gloves
  - water resistant and insulated boots with warm socks



