

# WORKING IN THE COLD


**TIPS:**

-Wear warm, loose, layered clothing.

-Frostbite Symptoms: cold, then numb/tingling, aching or brief pain.

-Cover your feet, hands, face and head.

-When it's cold, be constantly alert to health hazards.



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Overexposure to cold (indoors or outdoors) can be harmful to your health.

**Frostbite:** Body tissues may freeze when skin is exposed to extreme cold or touches a very cold object.

- The nose, ears, cheeks, fingers, and toes are at greatest risk.
- Worst cases can cause permanent tissue damage, loss of movement in affected parts, and possibly unconsciousness and death from heart failure.
- Damage may be greater if the body part is thawed, then refrozen.

**Hypothermia:** Exposure to cold may send body temperatures to dangerously low levels.

- It can occur in above-freezing temperatures when it's windy or you're exhausted or wearing wet clothes.
- Worst cases can lead to unconsciousness and death.

**Factors that increase the risks of frostbite and hypothermia include**

- Age
- Overweight
- Smoking and drinking
- Certain medications, allergies, or poor circulation
- Victim's failure to recognize symptoms and take prompt action

**Reduce the risks of exposure to extreme cold**

- Avoid bathing, smoking, or drinking alcohol before going into cold conditions.
- Wear layers of loose, dry clothes.
  - If possible, wear wool underneath and waterproof layer on top.
- Always cover hands, feet, face, and head in the cold.
  - An uncovered head can make the body lose up to 40% of its heat.
- Change or get dry immediately if clothes get wet.
- Keep moving while working in the cold. Take regular breaks in warm areas.
- Move to warm area when you start to feel very cold or numb.
  - Have a warm alcohol-free, caffeine-free drink.

**Recognize frostbite and hypothermia symptoms**

- **Frostbite symptoms include:**
  - Feeling extremely cold, then numb-with possible tingling, aching, or brief pain.
  - White or grayish yellow glossy skin, which may blister.
  - Confusion, failing eyesight, and shock as condition progresses.
- **Hypothermia symptoms include:**
  - Chills, shivering, numbness, and sometimes pain in the extremities.
  - Slurred speech, poor coordination, confusion, drowsiness.

**Respond quickly and correctly to frostbite and hypothermia symptoms**

- Act immediately when symptoms develop to prevent serious problems.
- Move to a warm place.
- Replace frozen, wet, or tight clothes with warm clothes or blankets.
- Drink a warm beverage-without alcohol or caffeine.
- Get medical help after first aid treatment.

### Take first aid actions for frostbite:

- Warm the frozen part immediately with blankets of warm water.
- Avoid touching the frozen part; don't rub or hit it.
- Keep the frozen part away from hot stoves, heat lamps, or hot water bottles.

### Take first aid actions for hypothermia:

- Cover victim with blankets-and/or lie next to person to give body heat.
- Don't use hot baths, electric blankets, or hot water bottles.
- Keep the person awake and give artificial respiration if needed.
- Get emergency help immediately if the person loses consciousness.

## WORKING IN THE COLD QUIZ

1. The body parts most at risk for frostbite are:
  - a. The nose, ears, cheeks, fingers, and toes
  - b. The legs
  - c. The stomach
2. Hypothermia occurs when your body temperature gets dangerously low.
  - a. True
  - b. False
3. The risks of hypothermia increase when it's windy and you're:
  - a. Exhausted or wearing wet clothes
  - b. Dressed too heavily
4. Clothing will best protect against frostbite and hypothermia if it's:
  - a. Tight
  - b. Loose and Layered
  - c. Light-colored
5. When you're going to work in cold conditions, it's especially important to cover your head.
  - a. True
  - b. False
6. If you get wet or feel uncomfortably chilled when working in cold, you should:
  - a. Ignore it
  - b. Take a break in a warm place
  - c. Drink hot coffee laced with brandy
7. Symptoms of frostbite include:
  - a. Red eyes
  - b. Skin that's pink, then blue
  - c. Skin that's glossy white or grayish yellow
8. Hypothermia symptoms include:
  - a. Cold, shivering, numbness, confusion
  - b. Extreme alertness and energy
  - c. Skin blisters and tingling sensation
9. If a body part is frostbitten, you should not warm it by:
  - a. Rubbing it
  - b. Using hot water, a heat lamp, or hot water bottle
  - c. Both a and b
10. If you have hypothermia symptoms, you should get medical help.
  - a. True
  - b. False

### Answer Key:

1. a
2. a
3. a
4. b
5. a
6. b
7. c
8. a
9. c
10. a