

Hypothermia

The management of heat induced illness is aimed at removing the cause and assisting the normal cooling mechanisms of the body.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a medical condition that occurs when the body's core temperature drops to dangerously low levels (less than 35°C) during prolonged exposure to cold temperatures.

Hypothermia is mostly associated with exposure to extreme cold, but it can also occur at higher temperatures if a person becomes chilled from being soaked with rain or submerged in water.

Severe shivering, one of the first signs of hypothermia, is helpful in keeping the body warm. As hypothermia progresses though, the shivering stops.

Symptoms & Treatment

Symptoms

- Lack of Shivering
- Dizziness
- Trouble speaking
- Confusion
- Hunger
- Nausea
- Cold to touch

Severe Symptoms

- Loss of consciousness
- Slurred speech
- Weak pulse

Treatment

- Quickly move the victim out of the cold
- Remove wet clothing.
- Warm the victim with blankets or warm clothing
- Only if the victim is far from medical care, use active rewarming by putting the victim near a heat source and putting warm (but not hot) water in containers against the skin
- Do not rub or massage the victim's skin
- Be very gentle when handling the victim
- Give warm (not hot) drinks to an alert victim who can easily swallow, but do not give alcohol or caffeine

