



Train. Protect. Prevent.

Frostbite

WHAT IS FROSTBITE? Frostbite is the freezing of skin and damage to underlying blood vessels upon exposure to extreme cold. Frostbite occurs when skin and other tissues are exposed to very cold temperatures. It can occur within minutes following exposure to extreme temperatures, or even in above freezing temperatures if there is a strong wind (wind chill) or if the person is wet or at a high altitude. Frostbite usually affects the hands, feet, nose, cheeks, and ears. Superficial frostbite injures the skin and tissues just beneath it, but usually does not permanently injure tissue. Deep frostbite, which also affects muscle, nerves, and blood vessels, may result in tissue death, a condition known as gangrene.



WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HYPOTHERMIA AND FROSTBITE?

Frostbite is an injury to the body that is caused by freezing. This causes a loss of feeling and color in affected areas. It most often affects the nose, ears, cheeks, chin, fingers or toes. Frostbite can permanently damage the body, and severe cases can lead to amputation. The warning signs are redness or pain in any skin area or a white or grayish-yellow skin area skin that feels unusually firm or waxy. A victim is often unaware of frostbite until someone else points it out because the frozen tissues are numb.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF FROSTBITE? Pain or prickling progressing to numbness; Pale, hard, and cold skin with waxy appearance; Flushing from blood rushing to area after it's rewarmed; Burning sensation and swelling from collected fluid that may last for weeks; Blisters; Black scab like crust, which may develop several weeks after exposure.

WHO'S MOST AT RISK? These factors increase the risk for frostbite: Intoxication with alcohol or other substances; Very young or very old age; Cardiovascular disease; Peripheral vascular disease (narrowing of blood vessels in the extremities); Poor circulation; Diabetes; Exhaustion, hunger, malnutrition, or dehydration; Winter sports, especially at high altitudes; Outdoor work; Windy and or wet weather; Homelessness; Severe injury; Smoking; Heavy alcohol consumption; Previous frostbite; Skin damage; and Constricting clothing and footwear.

TREATMENT You should seek emergency medical care to treat frostbite as soon as possible. Tell your provider about your exposure to cold, including what the temperature was and how long you were exposed. Your provider will also examine your skin, looking for signs of superficial and deep injury. Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Work Site Review: Hazards/Safety Suggestions

Company Name: _____ Work Site Location: _____

Date: _____ Start Time: _____ Finish Time: _____ Foreman/Supervisor: _____

Employee Signatures: (continue on back of sheet if necessary)

(My signature attests and verifies my understanding of and agreement to comply with, all company safety policies and regulations, and that I have not suffered, experienced, or sustained any recent job-related injury or illness)

Manager/Supervisor's Signature: _____

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