

Toolbox Talk: Frigid Temperature Safety

This week has started to bring frigid temperatures and fierce winds. It also will bring with it a steady stream of patients into hospital emergency rooms with cold-weather injuries ranging from slip-and-falls to frostbite. Here are some tips during this time.

Dress warmly and Stay Dry

Adults and children should wear:

- a hat
- a scarf or knit mask to cover face and mouth
- sleeves that are snug at the wrist
- mittens /gloves
- Water-resistant coat and boots
- several layers of loose-fitting clothing

Be sure the outer layer of your clothing is tightly woven, preferably wind resistant, to reduce body-heat loss caused by wind. Wool, silk, or polypropylene inner layers of clothing will hold more body heat than cotton. Stay dry-wet clothing chills the body rapidly. Excess perspiration will increase heat loss, so remove extra layers of clothing whenever you feel too warm. Do not ignore shivering. It's an important first sign that the body is losing heat. Persistent shivering is a signal to return indoors.

Avoid Exertion

Cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart. If you have heart disease or high blood pressure, follow your doctor's advice about shoveling snow or performing other hard work in the cold. Otherwise, if you have to do heavy outdoor chores, dress warmly and work slowly. Remember, your body is already working hard just to stay warm, so don't overdo it.

Understand Wind Chill

The Wind Chill index is the temperature your body feels when the air temperature is combined with the wind speed. For example, when the actual air temperature of the wind is 40°F (4°C) and its velocity is 35 mph, the exposed skin receives conditions equivalent to the still-air temperature being 11°F (-11°C).

Staying warm and dry is very important. Wear warm, water-resistant, wind-proof clothing and dress in layers. Cover the head, neck, mouth, nose and hands with a hat, scarf and gloves. Avoid touching cold objects, as they will quickly steal heat from the body. We want you to go home the way you came to work!!!!

Please be sure to sign your name to the training certification form.

