

Emergency response



Young people will explore serious situations and important skills through this fun game

Suitable for Scouts

You will need

- copies of the three briefing cards (found on the next pages)

Instructions

- 1** Discuss with the young people that they are going to find out about the symptoms of some serious conditions that can occur when you're out in cold conditions.
- 2** In small groups, make sure each person has access to the three lists of symptoms. Give everyone about 5 minutes to read the symptoms and treatments for the first condition, and discuss them if they want to, then set them aside.
- 3** Choose one person to be 'unwell', suffering from one of the three conditions.
- 4** The person playing the role of the patient will describe one of the symptoms to the other people in their group, who are the emergency response team.
- 5** The emergency response team can then ask yes/no questions to try and find out what's wrong with them and diagnose the condition based on their symptoms.
- 6** Once the condition has been diagnosed, the response team is challenged to suggest a treatment, based on what they remember. Then check the answers and make sure everyone is aware of what to do in each scenario.
- 7** Swap teams so that someone else describes the symptoms of another of the three conditions, and another team has to diagnose the condition. Keep going until all the conditions have been discussed.

Time needed
30 minutes

Badge



The Royal Marines sponsors the Snowsports Activity Badge

Partner



Outcomes

Young people will be equipped with the knowledge to identify sign of frostbite, hypothermia and dehydration, and the treatments that can make a difference until help arrives.

More information

For more badge resources and activities go to scouts.org.uk/supporters/the-royal-marines.



Frostbite

Frostbite is damage to skin and tissue caused by exposure to freezing temperatures – typically below -0.55°C (31F). It can affect any part of your body, but the extremities, such as the hands, feet, ears, nose and lips, are most likely to be affected.



Symptoms

Early stage (frostnip)

The symptoms usually begin with the affected parts feeling cold and painful. You'll experience pins and needles, throbbing or aching in those areas. Your skin will become cold and numb, and you may feel a tingling sensation. This stage is known as frostnip, and it often affects people who live or work in cold climates. The extremities are most commonly affected.

Intermediate stage

Prolonged exposure to cold will cause more tissue damage. The affected area will feel hard and frozen. When you're out of the cold and the tissue has thawed out, the skin will blister. There may also be swelling and itching.

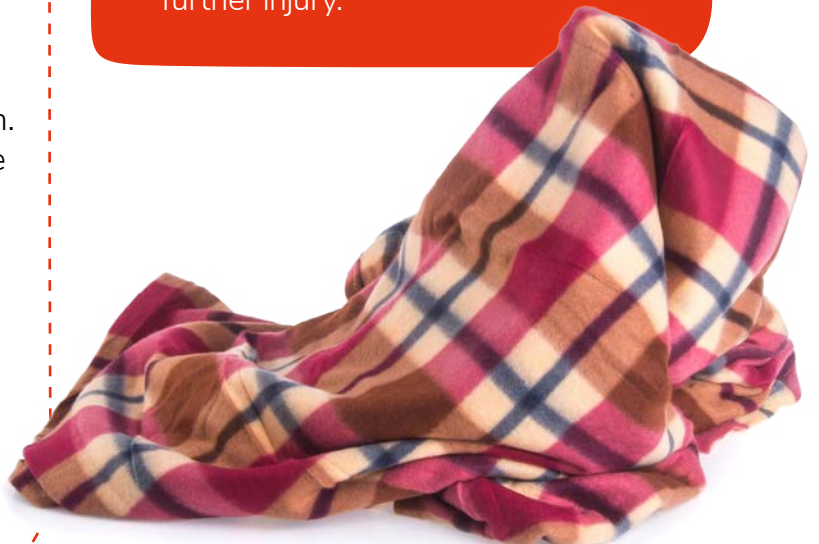
Advanced stage

When exposure to the cold continues, frostbite gets increasingly severe. The skin becomes blotchy, and the tissue underneath feels hard and cold to touch. Further damage may occur beneath the skin to tendons, muscles, nerves and bones. This is known as deep frostbite and requires urgent medical attention. As the skin thaws, blood-filled blisters form and turn into thick scabs. If exposure to the cold continues, you may feel pins and needles before the area becomes numb as the tissues freeze.

Treatment

Treatment for frostbite depends on how bad your symptoms are. Always seek medical attention if you think you or someone else has frostbite. If medical assistance isn't available, the following steps can be taken to treat frostbite:

- Move to a warmer place (if possible) – it's best to avoid walking on frostbitten feet and toes as it can cause further damage, but in emergency situations this may not be possible.
- Replace wet clothing with soft, dry clothing to stop further heat loss.
- Warm the body by wrapping it in blankets and protecting the frostbitten parts.
- Don't rub the affected area or apply direct heat (such as from a fire or heater) as this can cause further injury.



Hypothermia

Hypothermia is a dangerous drop in body temperature below 35°C (normal body temperature is around 37°C). It's a medical emergency that needs to be treated in hospital.



Symptoms

- Shivering
- Pale, cold and dry skin – the skin and lips change colour
- Slurred speech
- Slow breathing
- Tiredness or confusion.

Treatment

What to do while you're waiting for help

- Move the person indoors or somewhere sheltered as quickly as possible
- Remove any wet clothing, wrap them in a blanket, sleeping bag or dry towel, making sure their head is covered
- Give them a warm drink and some sugary food like chocolate if they're fully awake
- Keep them awake by talking to them until help arrives
- Make sure someone stays with them.

What not to do

- Do not use a hot bath, hot water bottle or heat lamp to warm them up
- Do not rub their arms, legs, feet or hands
- Do not give them alcohol to drink.



Dehydration

Dehydration means your body loses more fluids than you take in. If it's not treated, it can get worse and become a serious problem.



Symptoms

- Feeling thirsty
- Dark yellow and strong-smelling pee
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Feeling tired
- A dry mouth, lips and eyes
- Peeing little, and fewer than four times a day.

Treatment

- Drink small sips of water
- Use rehydration sachets
- If they find it hard to drink because they feel sick or have been sick, start with small sips and then gradually drink more
- You should drink enough during the day so your pee is a pale clear colour.

*Information from NHS.UK

