

Hypothermia

Definition:

Hypothermia is a medical condition in which the body temperature drops below the normal range of 35.0 °C.

Hypothermia can be the result of long exposure to cold and freezing temperatures or sometimes due to poorly heated environments and houses.

High risk populations are the elderly, newborns, babies, and very skinny people.

Signs & Symptoms:

- Cold skin, trembling
- Pale skin
- Lethargy and confusion
- Breathing difficulty
- Bradycardia or slow heart rate (under 60 beats/minute)

Treatment:

When Indoors:

- Wrap the patient with blankets or covers and place him/her in a warm space.
- Provide the patient a hot drink or high sugary foods, like chocolate.
- Call 140 for a Red Cross ambulance.
- Check the patient's vital signs, if possible, for specific respiration, heart rate, and response levels.

When Outdoors:

- Place the patient in a closed area as soon as possible. Protect him/her from the wind.
- Make sure that patient's head is covered all times.
- Remove and change any wet or soaked clothes.
- Protect the patient from the bare ground.

- Wrap him/her with blankets or available covers.
- Call 140 for emergency help.
- Do not leave the patient alone.
- Provide the patient a hot drink or high sugary foods, like chocolate.
- Check the patient's vital signs, specifically respiration, temperature and consciousness.
- When help arrives, the patient must be transferred to the nearest hospital by stretcher.