

Cold Weather Health Issues and Concerns

Cold weather can cause serious health problems such as hypothermia, frostbite, and even death. Shoveling and exercising in cold weather can lead to serious complications. Here's what you need to know:

High-Risk Factors

Cold-related illness can happen even in mild weather. Wind, humidity, or a lack of home heating can make it worse. Other risk factors include:

- Young children and elderly adults
- People with certain health conditions such as:
 - » Psoriasis
 - » Under-active Thyroid
 - » Adrenal Problems
- Alcohol users
- Those physically unfit or on medications affecting judgment
- People who over-exert or sweat while outside



Hypothermia

SIGNS:

- Shivering
- Pale, cold skin
- Fatigue, confusion
- Difficulty walking or talking
- Increased breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure



WHAT TO DO:

- Get medical help immediately
- Take shelter and remove wet clothes
- Dress warmly and re-warm the body

Frostbite

SIGNS:

- Redness of the skin
- Numbness
- Frozen, pale skin that feels firm or waxy (with or without blisters)



WHAT TO DO:

- Get medical help immediately
- Warm the affected area in warm (**not hot**) water
- Elevate the area rubbing the skin
- Remove wet clothes **DO NOT** rub affected tissues