



**HYPOTHERMIA** is the mental and physical collapse that results from a lowered inner temperature of the body. It commonly develops at 30 - 50 degrees F when the victim is wet.

**It is caused by:** Exposure to cold.

**It is enhanced by:** Water and wind.

**Symptoms to watch for:**

- Shivering
- Slurred speech
- Forgetfulness
- Irrational behavior
- Clumsiness, fumbling hands, and stumbling.
- Drowsiness or exhaustion.
- Lack of concern about physical discomfort.

**Watch your partner:** Hypothermia symptoms are usually noticed by others before the victim is aware of it.

**Prevention of Hypothermia:** Stay dry and out of the wind. Take clothing suitable for the worst weather expected. If you are unable to stay warm and dry, give up the trip goal, get out of the wind, make camp, build a fire, and drink hot fluids. Make camp while you still have energy left. The fact that you are moving about may be the only thing that is preventing you from becoming hypothermic. Also be aware of wind chill, dehydration, frostbite, altitude sickness, and hyperventilation.

Adequate clothing is essential for survival in the winter wilderness. When dressing for cross-country skiing, think in terms of **LAYERS**.

- Loose fitting long underwear (wool, silk, polypropylene, or blends)
- Long-sleeved wool shirt or ski sweater
- Knickers or loose fitting ski pants
- Windbreaker or parka with hood
- Wool stocking hat, and wool gloves or mittens
- Goggles or sunglasses
- Two pairs of socks (one light polypropylene, one heavy wool or blend)
- Gaiters or boot gloves
- A dry set of clothing in the car