

# Hypothermia



**IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

**DRSABCD** Danger ► Response ► Send for help ► Airway ► Breathing ► CPR ► Defibrillation

The DRSABCD Action Plan is the first step when providing first aid. Use this to assess the immediate situation.

## WARNING

- DO NOT rub affected areas.
- DO NOT use radiant heat such as fire or electric heaters.
- DO NOT give alcohol.

## MILD SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- feeling cold
- shivering
- clumsiness and slurred speech
- apathy and irrational behaviour

## SEVERE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- shivering ceases
- difficult to find pulse
- slow heart rate
- loss of consciousness

## WHAT TO DO

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Move the patient to a warm, dry place.
- 3 Help the patient to lie down in a comfortable position. Handle the patient as gently as possible, avoiding excess activity and movement.
- 4 Remove any wet clothing from the patient.
- 5 Place the patient between blankets or in a sleeping bag, and wrap them in an emergency blanket.
- 6 Cover the patient's head to maintain body heat.
- 7 Give the patient warm drinks if they are conscious. Do not give alcohol.
- 8 Place hot water bottles, heat packs and other sources of external heat directly on the patient's neck, armpits and groin. Be careful to avoid burns. Body-to-body contact may be used if other means of rewarming are not available.
- 9 If hypothermia is severe, **call triple zero (000)** for an ambulance.
- 10 Stay with the patient until medical aid arrives.

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