



First aid fact sheet

Hypothermia



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

Signs and symptoms

Mild

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

Severe

- 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 can 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.

In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)

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

You could save a life with first aid training • www.stjohn.org.au • **1 300 360 455**

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