

Injuries Caused By Cold and Wet Conditions

Injuries	Symptoms	First Aid
Chilblain	Red swollen, hot, tender, itching skin. Continued exposure may lead to infected (ulcerated or bleeding) skin lesions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Area usually responds to locally applied rewarming (body heat). 2- Do not rub or massage area. 3- Seek medical aid.
Immersion Syndrome (Immersion foot / Trench foot)	Affected parts are cold, numb, and painless. Parts may then be hot, with burning and shooting pains. Advanced stage: skin pale with bluish cast; pulse decreases; blistering, swelling, heat, hemorrhaging, and gangrene may follow	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Gradual rewarming by exposure to warm air. 2- Do not massage or moisten skin. 3- Protect affected parts from trauma. 4- Dry feet thoroughly, avoid walking 5- Seek medical aid.
Frostbite	Loss of sensation (numb feeling) in any part of the body. Sudden blanching (whitening) of the skin of the affected part, followed by a momentary tingling sensation. Redness of kin in light-skinned personnel; grayish coloring in dark-skinned personnel. Blisters. Swelling or tender areas. Loss of previous sensation of pain in the affected area. Pale yellowish, waxy-looking skin. Frozen tissue that feels solid (wooden) to the touch.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Warm the area at the first sign of frostbite, using firm, steady pressure of the hand, underarm or abdomen. 2- Face, ears, nose: Cover area with hands (casualty's own or buddy's) 3- Hands: Open jacket and place casualty's hands against his body, then close the jacket to prevent heat loss. 4- Feet: Remove casualty's boots and socks and place his feet against the body of another person. 5- Warning: Do not attempt to thaw the casualty's feet or other frozen areas if he will be required to walk or travel to a medical facility for additional treatment. The possibility of injury from walking is less when the feet are frozen than when they have been thawed. (However, if possible avoid walking). Thawing increases the possibility of infection, gangrene or injury. 6- Loosen or remove constricting clothing and remove any jewelry. 7- Increase insulation (cover with blanket or other dry material). Ensure the casualty exercises as much as possible, avoiding trauma to the injured part.
Snow Blindness	Eyes may feel scratchy. Watering, redness, headache, and increased pain with exposure to light can occur.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Cover the eyes with a dark cloth. 2- Seek medical aid.
Dehydration	Similar to heat exhaustion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Keep warm. 2- Casualty needs fluid replacement, rest, and prompt medical aid.
Hypothermia	Casualty is cold. Shivering. Core temperature is low. Consciousness may be altered. Uncoordinated movements may occur. Shock and coma may result as body temperature drops.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Rewarm body evenly and without delay. (Need to provide heat source; casualty's body unable to generate heat) 2- Keep dry, protect from elements. 3- Warm (not hot) liquids may be given gradually (to conscious casualties). 4- Be prepared to start basic life support measures for the casualty. 5- Seek medical treatment immediately. <p>SEVERE HYPOTHERMIA</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- Stabilize the temperature 2- Attempt to avoid further heat loss 3- Handle the casualty gently 4- Evacuate to the nearest Medical Facility as soon as possible. 5- WARNING: Hypothermia is a medical emergency. Prompt medical attention is necessary.

Treatment for cold weather injuries should be accomplished by trained medical personnel. Information above was adapted from U.S. Army FM 4-25.11, First Aid.