

# Frostbite

Frostbite is a condition that occurs when the skin and the tissue underneath the skin becomes frozen. Exposed skin can become frostbitten in as little as 30 seconds.

<p><b>Look First</b></p> <p><i>Check outside temperature and yourself frequently.</i></p>	<p><b>Preventing Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check the temperature and wind chill. Frostbite can occur at temperatures below – 4C.</li> <li>• Outdoor activities should be for short time periods, especially for children.</li> <li>• Play indoors at temperatures below - 25C, regardless of the wind chill.</li> </ul> <p><b>Identifying Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frostbite may be difficult to feel, so check yourself and others regularly.</li> <li>• Early signs are: numbness, tingling, and pain.</li> <li>• Frostbite commonly affects the hands, face, feet and genitals.</li> <li>• Skin appears white or gray.</li> <li>• Skin feels firm or even hard.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Get Trained</b></p> <p><i>Know how to prevent frostbite and treat it if it occurs.</i></p>	<p><b>Preventing Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep moving to allow circulation to get to all the body parts.</li> <li>• Come in from the cold regularly to get warm.</li> </ul> <p><b>Treating Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Come inside and change out of wet clothes as quickly as possible.</li> <li>• Go to the hospital, or see your physician as soon as possible.</li> <li>• Do <u>not</u> rub the area. You can damage the skin.</li> <li>• Re-warm the skin slowly. Put the affected body part next to warm skin or use a warm moist compress.</li> <li>• Stop the re-warming process when the skin becomes pink.</li> <li>• <b>Warning:</b> As frostbitten parts warm up they will become painful.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Wear the Gear</b></p> <p><i>Dress for the weather and the activities.</i></p>	<p><b>Preventing Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dress warmly and cover exposed skin.</li> <li>• Wet items need to be replaced as soon as possible</li> <li>• <b>Hat-</b> wear a hat that covers the ears and is close fitting.</li> <li>• <b>Boots-</b> Be sure boots are dry and not too tight to allow circulation.</li> <li>• <b>Mittens</b> instead of gloves.</li> <li>• <b>Socks-</b> a single pair of socks is best, either wool or a wool blend; cotton socks offer no insulation when wet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Stay Sober</b></p> <p><i>Avoid alcohol and/or drugs.</i></p>	<p><b>Preventing Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Avoid alcoholic beverages.</b> Alcohol interferes with the body’s ability to regulate body temperature.</li> <li>• <b>Be alert</b> to changing weather conditions and check your skin frequently.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Buckle Up</b></p> <p><i>Keep the heat in.</i></p>	<p><b>Preventing Frostbite</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Zipper and fasten</b> all clothing appropriately to keep body heat in and to limit skin exposure.</li> </ul>