

Subject: Treatment Guidelines – BLS  
**Cold Emergencies**

Associated Policies:

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- I. Priorities
  - A. ABC's.
  - B. Gently remove from offending environment.
  - C. Determine degree of physiologic distress, identify nature of illness or injury.
  - D. Communicate with transporting ambulance.
  
- II. Hypothermia
  - A. Moderate Hypothermia:
    1. Body temperature 84°-95° F, conscious and shivering - may have altered LOC, skin pale and cold.
      - a. Ensure a patent airway.
      - b. Gently move from cold environment, minimizing physical exertion or movement of the patient. Cut away all wet/cold clothing, dry and cover patient with dry blankets (pre-warm, if possible).
      - c. Apply hot packs to arm pits, groin and head.
      - d. Administer oxygen if indicated by Policy # 6030.
      - e. Contact transporting ambulance.
  
  - B. Severe Hypothermia:
    1. Body temperature 84° F or lower, altered LOC, including coma, dilated pupils, weak to absent pulses, slow to absent respirations.
      - a. Handle gently. Vigorous handling may cause cardiac arrest. Be prepared to support ventilations using appropriate airway adjuncts.
      - b. Assure an adequate airway. Provide oxygen if indicated by Policy # 6030.
      - c. If breathing is inadequate, ventilate with Bag Valve Mask at appropriate rate.
      - d. Move patient to a warm environment. Quickly and gently remove cold and wet clothing, and dry patient. Cover and protect patient from further heat loss with dry blankets.
      - e. Apply hot pack to arm pits, groin and head.
      - f. If pulseless and apneic, begin CPR while continuing warming measures.
      - g. Communicate with transporting ambulance.
  
- II. C. Frostbite/Frozen Extremities  
Areas of skin that are white, numb or burning, soft to touch but do not re-color with touch.

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1. Evaluate and treat hypothermia.
2. Move to warm environment and wrap affected extremity with thick, warmed blankets or clothing .
3. Do not rub or otherwise attempt active re-warming.
4. Contact transporting ambulance.
5. Never thaw the tissue, if there is any possibility of it refreezing.

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Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 12-18-19

Approved as to Form: \_\_\_\_\_  
12/19

Date: 12-18-19