



DECEMBER SAFETY TOOLBOX

MONTHLY SAFETY AWARENESS DISCUSSION GUIDE

WAYS TO PROTECT AGAINST COLD STRESS

Introductory Comments

Cold environments force your body to work harder and use more energy to maintain its temperature. Blood flow shifts from outer extremities to your core and that increases the risk for frostbite and hypothermia. Both frostbite and hypothermia can lead to amputations and death. Here's what to do:

Layer clothing. Wear an outer layer of wind-breaking material such as nylon or Goretex, a middle layer of down or wool to absorb sweat and provide insulation and an inner layer of cotton to allow for ventilation.

Protect your extremities. Wear a hat. Up to 40% of body heat is lost through your head. Make sure boots and gloves are insulated and waterproof. It's a good idea to bring an extra set in case they get wet.

Drink fluids. Drink plenty of warm liquids, but avoid caffeine. It is easy for the body to become dehydrated in cold weather.

Here's how to spot symptoms and provide care:

Frostbite – Symptoms progress from tingling, stinging or aching in frostbitten area and are followed by numbness. Skin color turns from red to purple to white in severe cases will blister. Wrap the area with soft cloths and soak in warm water. Don't rub the area.

Mild hypothermia – Symptoms include shivering, lack of coordination, slurred speech and memory loss. Move victim to a warm area, remove wet clothing, cover with blankets and give warm liquids.

Moderate hypothermia – Shivering stops, victim is unable to stand and becomes confused or irrational. Call 911. Then cover all extremities completely and place hot packs on the head, neck, chest and groin.

Severe hypothermia – Muscles grow stiff, victim passes out and eventually dies. If someone shows signs of severe hypothermia, call 911. Begin CPR if the victim is not breathing and has no pulse.

Instructions:

Use this Safety Toolbox Talk to spark discussion within the employee group. Test knowledge retention with the associated quiz.

Meeting Starter Questions

- What parts of your job put you at risk for cold stress?
- What types of personal protective equipment do you wear to protect yourself against the cold?
- Do you know what to do if you or a co-worker is suffering from signs or symptoms of cold stress?

Critical Safety Points

Cold temperatures and increased wind speed (wind chill) cause heat to leave the body more quickly, putting workers at risk of cold stress. Anyone working in the cold may be at risk.

Safety Tips for Workers

- Know the symptoms of cold stress
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers
- Dress appropriately for the cold
- Stay dry in the cold because moisture or dampness, e.g. from sweating, can increase the rate of heat loss from the body
- Keep extra clothing (including underwear) handy in case you get wet and need to change
- Drink warm sweetened fluids (no alcohol)
- Use proper engineering controls, safe work practices, and personal protective equipment (PPE) provided by your employer

Reference source: https://www.osha.gov/dts/weather/winter_weather/beprepared.html

Helpful City of Memphis COVID Resources

Temporary Coronavirus Leave and Travel Policy:

https://totalrewards.memphistn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/City-of-Memphis-Covid-19-Policy_PM4604_110220-003FINAL.pdf

What to do Fact Sheet:

https://totalrewards.memphistn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/COM-Covid-What-to-Do-Fact-Sheet_110220-003FINAL.pdf

Safety is not an option, Safety is the way we Live!



Employee Name:	Signature:
Division:	Date:
Instructor:	Score:

WAYS TO PROTECT AGAINST COLD STRESS

Question 1: Your body uses less energy in cold working environments.

TRUE FALSE

Question 2: Your outer extremities face increased risk for developing a cold related injury.

TRUE FALSE

Question 3: Up to 60% of your heat is lost through your head.

TRUE FALSE

Question 4: Boots and gloves should be insulated and waterproofed.

TRUE FALSE

Question 5: Tingling, stinging or aching followed by numbness is a sign of frostbite.

TRUE FALSE

Quiz Answer Key:

1. FALSE
2. TRUE
3. FALSE
4. TRUE
5. TRUE