

## GOLF COURSE IRRIGATION SALES CO.

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## Four Lines of Defense Against "Hypothermia"

### COLD KILLS IN TWO DISTINCT STEPS

#### STEP ONE: EXPOSURE AND EXHAUSTION

The moment your body begins to *lose heat* faster than it produces it, you are under-going exposure. Two things happen:

1. You voluntarily *exercise to stay warm*.
2. Your body makes involuntary adjustments to preserve *normal temperature in the vital organs*.

Either response drains your energy reserves. The only way to stop the drain is to reduce the degree of exposure...

- **THE TIME TO PREVENT HYPOTHERMIA IS DURING THE PERIOD OF EXPOSURE AND GRADUAL EXHAUSTION.**

#### STEP TWO: HYPOTHERMIA

If exposure continues until your energy reserves are exhausted:

1. Cold reaches the brain depriving you of judgment and reasoning power. *You will not realize this is happening.*
2. You will lose control of your hands.

This is hypothermia. Your internal temperature is sliding downward. Without treatment, this slide leads to stupor, collapse, and death.

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### YOUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE: AVOID EXPOSURE

1. **STAY DRY.** When clothes get wet, they lose about 90% of their insulating value. Wool loses less; cotton, down, and synthetics lose more.
2. **BEWARE THE WIND.** A slight breeze carries heat away from bare skin much faster than still air. Wind drives cold air under and through clothing. *Wind refrigerates wet clothes* by evaporating moisture from the surface. **WIND MULTIPLIES THE PROBLEMS OF STAYING DRY.**
3. **UNDERSTAND COLD.** Most hypothermia cases develop in air temperatures between 30 and 50 degrees. Most outdoorsmen simply can't believe such temperatures can be dangerous. They fatally underestimate the danger of being wet at such temperatures.
  - 50 degree *water* is unbearably cold. The cold that kills is *cold water* running down neck and legs, *cold water* held against the body by sopping clothes, *cold water* flushing body heat from the surface of the clothes.



● DON'T ASK, "HOW COLD IS THE AIR?" ASK INSTEAD, "HOW COLD IS THE WATER AGAINST MY BODY?"

4. USE YOUR CLOTHES. Put on raingear *before* you get wet. Put on wool clothes *before* you start shivering.

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### YOUR SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE: TERMINATE EXPOSURE

If you cannot stay dry and warm under existing weather conditions, using the clothes you have with you, *terminate exposure*.

1. BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO GIVE UP REACHING THE PEAK OR GETTING THE FISH OR WHAT-EVER YOU HAD IN MIND.
2. Get out of the *wind and rain*. Build a fire. Concentrate on making your camp or bivouac as secure and comfortable as possible.

### NEVER IGNORE SHIVERING

Persistent or violent shivering is clear warning that you are on the verge of hypothermia. MAKE CAMP.

### FORESTALL EXHAUSTION

Make camp while you still have a reserve of energy. Allow for the fact that exposure greatly reduces your normal endurance.

You may think you are doing fine when the fact that you are exercising is the only thing preventing your going into hypothermia. If exhaustion forces you to stop, however briefly:

(cont'd. page 18)

(Four Lines of Defense cont'd.)

1. Your rate of body heat production instantly drops by 50% or more.
2. Violent, incapacitating shivering may begin immediately.
3. You may slip into hypothermia in a matter of minutes.

### APPOINT A FOUL-WEATHER LEADER

Make the best-protected member of your party responsible for calling a halt before the least-protected member becomes exhausted or goes into violent shivering.

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### YOUR THIRD LINE OF DEFENSE: DETECT HYPOTHERMIA

If your party is exposed to wind, cold, and wet, THINK HYPOTHERMIA. Watch yourself and others for symptoms.

1. Uncontrollable fits of shivering.
2. Vague, slow, slurred speech.
3. Memory lapses. Incoherence.
4. Immobile, fumbling hands.
5. Frequent stumbling. Lurching gait.
6. Drowsiness (to sleep is to die.)
7. Apparent exhaustion. Inability to get up after a rest.

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### YOUR FOURTH AND LAST LINE OF DEFENSE: TREATMENT

The victim may deny he's in trouble. Believe the symptoms, not the patient. Even mild symptoms demand immediate, drastic treatment.

1. Get the victim out of the wind and rain.
2. Strip off *all* wet clothes.
3. If the patient is only mildly impaired:
  - a. Give him warm drinks.
  - b. Get him into dry clothes and a warm sleeping bag. Well-wrapped, warm (not hot) rocks or canteens will hasten recovery.
4. If the patient is semi-conscious or worse:
  - a. Try to keep him awake. Give warm drinks.
  - b. Leave him stripped. Put him in a sleeping bag with another person (also stripped). If you have a double bag, put the victim between *two* warmth donors. *Skin to skin contact* is the most effective treatment.
5. Build a fire to warm the camp.

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