

# Wilderness Survival

Adapted from Boy Scouts of America  
Series : Wilderness Survival

# What is wilderness survival?

- *Knowing how to stay alive until an emergency is over (usually 24-48 hours if travel plan was made)*
- **Planned Situation** – training exercise with minimal supplies
- **Unplanned** - Lost in nature, injured while hiking, capsized canoe, broken down vehicle

# 7 Survival Priorities

Knowing priorities in an emergency  
lets you start to work immediately  
and without confusion.



# 1. Positive Mental Attitude

- Positive mental attitude may be the most essential element in survival.
- When you first realize you are lost or confused, **STOP**

# S . T . O . P .

- **Stop**, before you do anything. Take off your pack and find a dry place to sit. Relax
- **Think**. Study your map if you have one. If you don't have a map, think about where you could have gone wrong



## S.T.O.P. Continued

- **Observe.** What do you have that may help you? Weather? What natural resources are available? Where is a good place to make camp?
- **Plan** a course of action. Adopt a plan that will best utilize your limited reservoir of energy. If dark, stay where you are.
- *It is easier to find a stationary person than a moving one.*

## 2. First Aid

1. If an injury is life threatening, such as rapid loss of blood, first aid becomes the most important thing to do.

### 3. Shelter

- In extreme cold finding or building a shelter of top importance
- Even more urgent if night is approaching.



## 4. Fire

- You will need a fire for warmth and signaling. Fuel should be secured and the fire started before dark.

## 5. Signaling

- When you have taken the first steps in dealing with the emergency, you will need to prepare rescue signals.

## 6. Water

- Under all circumstances, water is essential. You can live only a few days without it.
- More important in hot, dry weather



## 7. Food

- A person can live several weeks without food; it does not rate high as a survival priority.

# Dangers of Cold

- Hypothermia
- Frostbite



# How does your body lose heat?

- **Radiation** - Heat given off just because we are warmer than the air around us
- **Respiration** - Heat lost in the air we exhale
- **Conduction** - Heat lost while we are in contact with cold surfaces
- **Evaporation** - Heat lost by evaporating sweat on our skin
- **Convection** - Heat passed on to the surrounding air



# Hypothermia

- Hypothermia is a drop in the body's core temperature (in the central part of the body).
- As the body loses heat, it begins to function less and less efficiently.
- Blood vessels constrict, drawing blood away from the hands and feet toward the heart and lungs

# Effects of Body Temps.

- **98.6 ° F** : Average normal body temperature
- **96.0 ° F** : Body shivers to generate heat. Chemical reactions slow.
- **94.0 ° F** : Body may shiver uncontrollably. Mental and physical processes are very inefficient; good chance of making dangerous, irrational mistakes.





# Affects of Body Temps

- **92.0 ° F** : Beyond this body requires added heat to warm itself. Person is mentally and physically incompetent.
- **90.0 ° F 85° F** : All shivering stops. Muscles become rigid. Unconsciousness sets in.
- **78.0 ° F** : Death occurs



# Signs of Hypothermia

- Mild Hypothermia (above 90.0 ° F):  
Look for consistent shivering and blue lips, progressing to slurred speech, dazed expression, and stiff muscles.
- Severe Hypothermia (below 90.0 ° F):  
Shivering has stopped. Person appears confused and unaware; muscles are rigid and unconsciousness sets in.

# Treatment of Hypothermia

- You must get the victim warm.
- Reduce heat loss and add heat.
- Get victim out of the cold and remove wet clothing. Replace it with dry clothing or a sleeping bag.
- If possible, get to a warm place



# Treatment of Hypothermia

- Get several people to huddle around the victim to slowly add heat.
- If conscious, give victim warm liquids to drink.
- They should see a doctor as soon as possible.



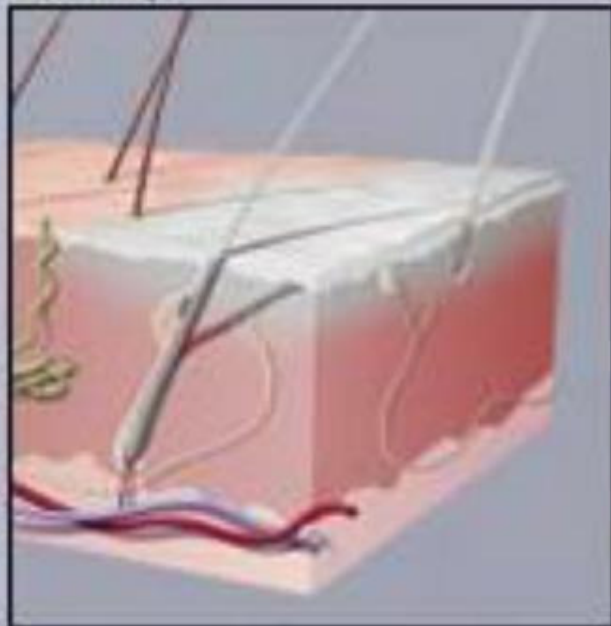
# Frostbite

- *Frostbite* occurs when cells in the body freeze and burst.
- Commonly happens to cheeks, nose, and ears, and to hands and feet.
- Water inside your cells freezes, it will expand and burst your cells.
- Not usually fatal, but it can kill body parts, turning them black resulting in amputation

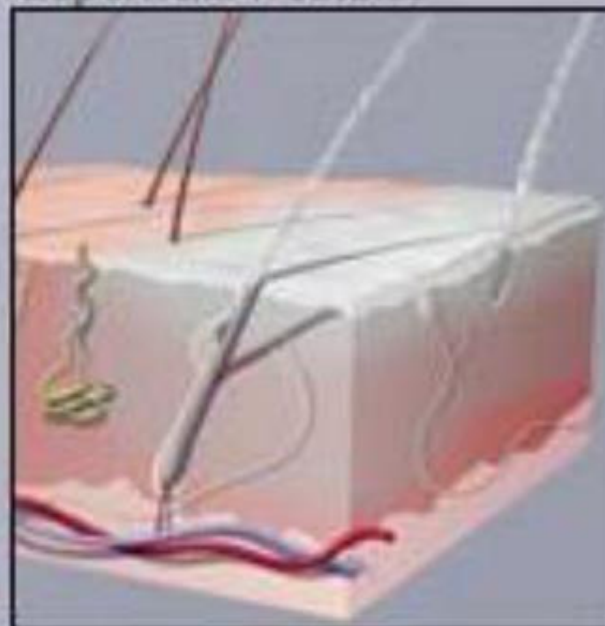
# Signs of Frostbite

- Pain or burning in exposed area.
- Skin will become yellow-gray or white
- Numbness in affected area

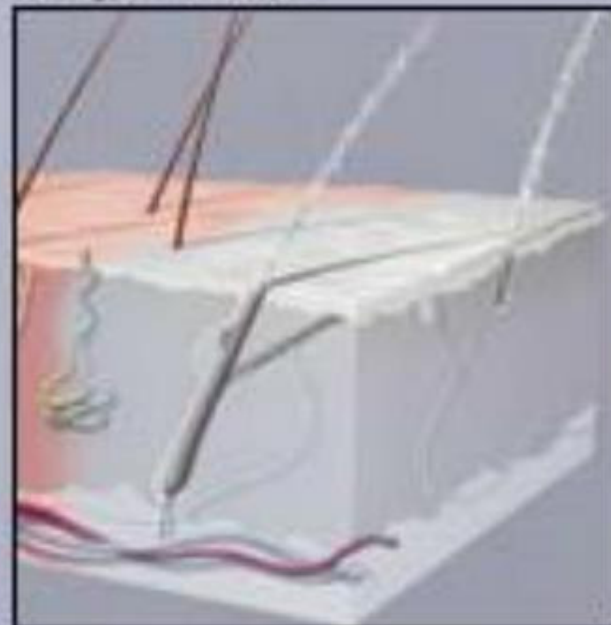
Frostnip



Superficial frostbite



Deep frostbite





# **Treatment of Frostbite**

- Get into shelter to rewarm
- Exposed hands can be placed on stomach or armpit
- Put them in lukewarm (not hot) water.
- If numb see a doctor.







