

## Safety meeting blueprint

✓ **Meeting Topic:** Cold-related injuries

✓ **Today's Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

✓ **Attendee Signatures:**

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While most of us already know that we're at risk for injuries when laboring in cold conditions, we might not realize that one of the biggest dangers is heart failure.

Here's why: When we breathe cold air, our hearts don't get enough oxygen. Plus, lower temperatures constrict blood vessels, meaning that the heart has to work harder in the cold.

That's one more reason to pay attention to safety when temperatures are low.

### **Directly related**

Of course, we also want to avoid injuries directly related to the cold, such as frostbite, which happens when the skin freezes and causes ice crystals to form between the cells.

Symptoms of frostbite include numbness, aching, stinging, tingling, and blue or pale waxy-looking skin.

If you begin to suffer these symptoms, go indoors immediately. Remove restrictive clothing and jewelry that could impair blood circulation. Also elevate the affected

area to reduce the pain and swelling, and place dry, sterile gauze between the toes and fingers to absorb moisture and prevent the body parts from sticking together.

### **Low body temperature**

When working in the cold, you're also at risk for hypothermia – the body is unable to replace heat lost to the environment, which leads to an abnormally low body temperature.

*(What are the symptoms of hypothermia?)*

The early symptoms of hypothermia include shivering, fatigue, loss of coordination, confusion and disorientation. When the condition becomes more severe, symptoms include no shivering, blue skin, dilated pupils, shallow breathing and an irregular heartbeat.

Because severe hypothermia can be fatal, you want to know how to assist a coworker suffering from the condition.

First, seek immediate medical assistance. Then move the person to a

warm, dry room or a shelter. Remove wet clothing, shoes and socks. Keep the victim in a horizontal position and cover him or her with layers of blankets or towels and a vapor barrier such as a tarp or a garbage bag.

### **Proper dress**

One of the best ways to avoid hypothermia and related conditions is to dress appropriately before working in the cold.

Remember the three-layer rule:

Layer 1: Inner garments made of wool, silk, other animal fibers, or synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene that soak up moisture from the body.

Layer 2: Animal fibers such as wool, silk, goose down, or synthetic fleece that trap warm air close to the body.

Layer 3: Windproof, water-resistant garments that allow for ventilation to prevent overheating.

Thanks for your attention. And remember, let's stay safe out there!

*(See next page for test)*

## Safety meeting blueprint: Test your knowledge

### Meeting Topic: Cold-related injuries

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|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>1. When treating frostbite, what should you place between the toes and fingers to absorb moisture?</b></p> <p>a. Dry, sterile gauze<br/>b. A wet towelette<br/>c. Dirty rags<br/>d. Any of the above</p> | <p>b. Low temperatures constrict blood vessels<br/>c. The heart has to work harder in the cold<br/>d. All of the above</p>  | <p><b>hypothermia include</b></p> <p>a. Shivering<br/>b. Fatigue<br/>c. Loss of coordination<br/>d. All of the above</p>  | <p><b>a symptom of frostbite?</b></p> <p>a. Excessive sweating<br/>b. Euphoria<br/>c. Red skin<br/>d. None of the above</p>  |
| <p><b>2. What's the name of the condition that happens when the body is unable to replace heat lost to the environment?</b></p> <p>a. Frostbite<br/>b. Hypothermia<br/>c. Trench foot<br/>d. Chilblains</p>    | <p><b>4. When treating a victim of hypothermia, you should keep the person in a vertical position so the blood flows to his or her feet. True or False?</b></p>   | <p><b>7. What's the name of the condition that happens when the skin freezes and causes ice crystals to form between the cells?</b></p> <p>a. Frostbite<br/>b. Hypothermia<br/>c. Trench foot<br/>d. Chilblains</p> | <p><b>10. When dressing for cold-weather work, your first layer should be</b></p> <p>a. Water-resistant garments<br/>b. Synthetic fleece<br/>c. Garments made of wool, silk, or other animal fibers<br/>d. None of the above</p> |
| <p><b>3. The heart is at risk in cold conditions because</b></p> <p>a. The heart doesn't get enough oxygen when temperatures are low</p>   | <p><b>5. The outer layer of clothing worn for cold-weather work should</b></p> <p>a. Be dark-colored to absorb the sunlight<br/>b. Allow for ventilation<br/>c. Include reflective materials so others can see you<br/>d. None of the above</p> | <p><b>8. One of the best ways to avoid hypothermia and related conditions is to dress appropriately before working in the cold. True or False?</b></p>  | <p><b>11. If you begin to experience the symptoms of frostbite, you should</b></p> <p>a. Ignore it until the end of your shift<br/>b. Tell your coworkers<br/>c. Go indoors immediately<br/>d. None of the above</p>             |
|  | <p><b>6. Early symptoms of</b></p>  | <p><b>9. Which of the following is</b></p>  |  |

### Test your knowledge: The answers

1. a  
2. b  
3. d  
4. False. A victim of hypothermia should be kept in a horizontal position and covered with layers of blankets or towels.  
5. b. The ventilation can prevent overheating.  
6. d  
7. a  
8. True. When dressing for cold-weather work, remember the three-layer rule.  
9. d. The symptoms of frostbite include numbness, tingling, stinging, aching, and blue or pale waxy-looking skin.  
10. c  
11. c. Once inside, remove clothing that could restrict blood flow.