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CITY OF BOSTON COLD-WEATHER “DOs AND DON’Ts”

DO

Layer clothing

Layer clothing using things like thermal underwear, undershirts, track suits, sweaters, snowsuits, boots, hats, gloves and scarves. Hats are important – 40% of body heat can be lost when the head is uncovered!

Cover Exposed Skin

In extreme cold conditions, frostbite can happen in under a minute. Wind only makes the risk greater – make sure to cover all exposed skin.

Keep Moving

Your body generates its own heat when you engage in physical activity – keeping moving will help to keep you warm.

Check on Elderly Family and Neighbors

The elderly are particularly susceptible to cold-related illness. Ensure elderly family and neighbors have adequate heat and nutritious food.

Avoid Getting Wet

Moisture can speed the onset of hypothermia and can be very dangerous. If you expect to get wet, keep a dry set of clothing nearby – especially hat, gloves, socks, and boots.

Drink non-caffeinated Fluids

Dehydration occurs more quickly in cold, dry weather. Be sure to keep yourself well hydrated, especially if you are exerting yourself.

Keep Pets Indoors

Pets suffer in the cold just like humans, yet they have little means to protect themselves. Help your pets stay warm by keeping them indoors!

DON’T

Drink alcohol

Alcohol can speed the onset and worsen the effects of hypothermia.

Overexert Yourself

Cold weather can exacerbate underlying respiratory illnesses – be careful about exerting yourself in extreme cold.

Stay Out in the Cold!

If you have to stay out in the cold for work, be sure to take frequent breaks where it is warm.

REMEMBER

Look for signs of hypothermia

Including confusion, inappropriate behavior, extreme weakness or lethargy.

Look for signs of frostbite

Including pale and waxy skin - the affected areas feel cold, hard, and solid to the touch.

If you or anyone you know exhibits these symptoms, get in touch with a healthcare provider immediately. **If the symptoms are severe, do not hesitate to call 9-1-1.**