

Preventing Hypothermia

Some parts of the country are receiving an early dose of heavy snow storms and plunging temperatures. These cold temperatures can make your body lose heat faster than it's produced. This condition results in abnormally low body temperature, also known as [hypothermia](#).

Hypothermia affects the brain, leaving the person unable to think clearly or move well. This makes hypothermia particularly dangerous because individuals experiencing it may not know that it's happening. Individuals most often affected by hypothermia include:

- Older adults with inadequate heating, food or clothing;
- Babies sleeping in cold rooms; and
- People who remain outdoors for long periods like the homeless, hikers or hunters.

In extreme cold, make outside trips as brief as possible to protect your health and safety. However, if you must be outside [take a few special precautions](#):

- Work slowly if you have to do heavy outdoor chores;
- Notify friends and family where you will be before you go hiking, camping or skiing; and
- Dress warmly and in layers. A waterproof jacket will help you stay warm and dry if it starts to snow.

Do not ignore shivering. It is an important first sign that the body is losing heat. [Learn the other signs](#) of hypothermia and how to care for someone who may be suffering from it before your next outdoor winter excursion.