



# Stark County Department of Emergency Services

Emergency Management / 9-1-1

66 Museum Drive W  
Dickinson, ND 58601

Tel: (701) 456-7605  
Fax: (701) 456-7602

[www.starkcountynd.gov](http://www.starkcountynd.gov)

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 28, 2014

**Contact:** Bill Fahlsing  
(701) 456-7605

## **Care for hypothermia**

Dickinson, ND -

### **Care for hypothermia:**

- Check ABC's (airway, breathing, and circulation)
- Call 9-1-1
- Care for life-threatening conditions
- Make the person comfortable, remove wet clothing and dry the person
- Warm the body gradually by wrapping the person in blankets or putting on dry clothing and moving him or her to a warm place
- If they are available, apply heat pads or other heat sources to the body. Keep a barrier, such as a blanket, towel or clothing, between the heat source and the person to avoid burning him or her
- If the person is alert, give warm liquids that do not contain alcohol or caffeine
- Do not warm the person too quickly, such as immersing them in warm water. Rapid rewarming can cause dangerous heart problems
- Handle the person gently

**Severe hypothermia:** In cases of severe hypothermia, the person may be unconscious. Breathing may have slowed or stopped. The pulse may be slow and irregular. In these circumstances, when checking for signs of life, the pulse should be checked for 30-45 seconds. The body may feel stiff because the muscles became rigid.

### **Care for severe hypothermia:**

- Call 9-1-1
- Keep checking breathing and signs of life
- Give rescue breathing or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if necessary
- Continue to warm the person until emergency medical services (EMS) personnel arrive
- Be prepared to start CPR and use an automated external defibrillator (AED) if needed



# Stark County Department of Emergency Services

Emergency Management / 9-1-1

66 Museum Drive W  
Dickinson, ND 58601

Tel: (701) 456-7605  
Fax: (701) 456-7602

[www.starkcountynd.gov](http://www.starkcountynd.gov)

**Frostbite:** Frostbite is the freezing of body parts exposed to the cold. Severity depends on the air temperature, length of exposure and the wind. Frostbite can cause the loss of fingers, hands, arms, toes, feet, and legs. The signals of frostbite include lack of feeling in the affected area and skin that appears waxy, is cold to the touch, or is discolored (flushed, white, yellow or blue).

### Care for frostbite:

- Handle the frostbitten area gently
- Never rub an affected area, rubbing causes further damage to soft tissues
- Do not attempt to rewarm the frostbitten area if there is a chance that it might refreeze or if you are close to a medical facility.
- If you do warm the area, do so gently by soaking it in water not warmer than 105 degrees F. If you do not have a thermometer, test the water temperature yourself. If the temperature is uncomfortable to your touch, it is too warm.
- Keep the frostbitten part in the water until normal color returns and it feels warm
- Loosely bandage the area with a dry, sterile dressing
- If fingers or toes are frostbitten, place cotton or gauze between them.
- Do not break any blisters
- Take precautions to prevent hypothermia
- Call 9-1-1 or seek emergency medical help as soon as possible

Source: <http://www.nd.gov/des/get/severe-winter-weather/>

###