

## DETECT HYPOTHERMIA .

If your group is exposed to WIND, COLD, OR WET, think hypothermia. Watch yourself and others for the symptoms:

- Uncontrollable fits of shivering.
- Vague, slow, slurred speech.
- Memory lapses, or incoherence.
- Immobile, fumbling hands.
- Frequent stumbling.
- Drowsiness (to sleep is to die.)
- Apparent exhaustion. Inability to get up after a rest.

## TREATMENT

The victim may deny he/she is in trouble. Believe the symptoms, not the person. Even mild symptoms demand immediate treatment.

1. Get the victim out of the wind and rain.
2. Strip off all wet clothes.
3. If the victim is only mildly impaired:
  - Give him/her warm drinks (only small amounts).
  - Get him/her into dry clothes and a warm dry sleeping bag. Well-wrapped warm thermoses placed in the crotch and under the arms anywhere the main arteries are close to the surface of the skin, will hasten recovery.
4. If the patient is semi-conscious or worse:
  - Try to keep him/her awake. (Do not give hot liquids by mouth.)
  - Leave him/her stripped. Put him/her in a sleeping bag with another person (also stripped) to transfer heat. If you can put the victim between two donors, skin to skin contact is very effective treatment.
5. Warm the torso only - not extremities.
6. Transport the victim as soon as possible to the closest hospital for monitoring. It takes a very long time to warm the inner core and only a rectal hypothermia thermometer is long enough to find out what the inner core temperature really is. DON'T DELAY!