



"BREAK ROOM NEWS"



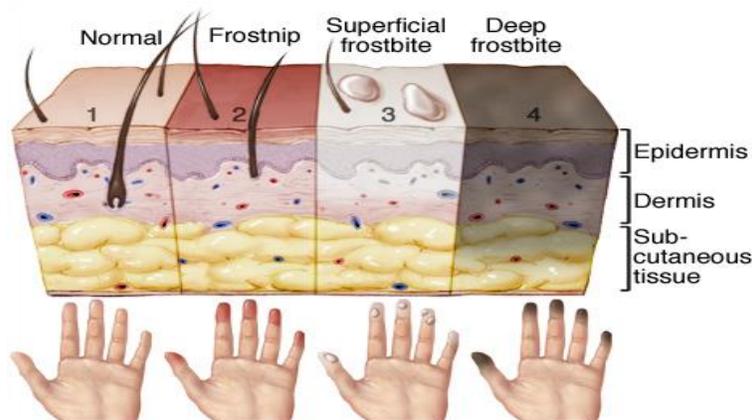
Frostbite Awareness

January 2018

FROSTBITE is an injury caused by freezing of the skin and underlying tissues. First your skin becomes very cold and red, then numb, hard and pale. Frostbite is most common on the fingers, toes, nose, ears, cheeks and chin. Exposed skin in cold, windy weather is most vulnerable to frostbite. But frostbite can occur on skin covered by gloves or other clothing.

FROSTBITE occurs in several stages:

- **Frostnip.** The first stage of frostbite is frostnip. With this mild form of frostbite, your skin pales or turns red and feels very cold. Continued exposure leads to prickling and numbness in the affected area. As your skin warms, you may feel pain and tingling. Frostnip doesn't permanently damage the skin.
- **Superficial frostbite.** The second stage of frostbite appears as reddened skin that turns white or pale. The skin may remain soft, but some ice crystals may form in the tissue. Your skin may begin to feel warm — a sign of serious skin involvement. If you treat frostbite with rewarming at this stage, the surface of your skin may appear mottled, blue or purple. And you may notice stinging, burning and swelling. A fluid-filled blister may appear 24 to 36 hours after rewarming the skin.
- **Severe (deep) frostbite.** As frostbite progresses, it affects all layers of the skin, including the tissues that lie below. You may experience numbness, losing all sensation of cold, pain or discomfort in the affected area. Joints or muscles may no longer work. Large blisters form 24 to 48 hours after rewarming. Afterward, the area turns black and hard as the tissue dies.



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Frostbite Prevention

FROSTBITE can be prevented. Here are tips to help our Road Commissions stay safe and warm.

- **Pay attention to weather forecasts and wind chill readings.** In very cold, windy weather, exposed skin can develop frostbite in a matter of minutes.
- **Dress in several layers of loose, warm clothing.** Air trapped between the layers of clothing acts as insulation against the cold. Wear windproof and waterproof outer garments to protect against wind, snow and rain. Choose undergarments that wick moisture away from your skin. Change out of wet clothing — particularly gloves, hats and socks — as soon as possible.
- **Wear a hat or headband that fully covers your ears.** Heavy woolen or windproof materials make the best headwear for cold protection.
- **Wear mittens rather than gloves.** Mittens provide better protection. Or try a thin pair of glove liners made of a wicking material (like polypropylene) under a pair of heavier gloves or mittens.
- **Wear socks and sock liners that fit well, wick moisture and provide insulation.** You might also try hand and foot warmers. Be sure the foot warmers don't make your boots too tight, restricting blood flow.
- **Watch for signs of frostbite.** Early signs of frostbite include red or pale skin, prickling, and numbness.
- **Plan to protect yourself.** When traveling in cold weather, carry emergency supplies and warm clothing in case you become stranded. If you'll be in remote territory, tell others your route and expected return time.
- **Don't drink alcohol if you plan to be outdoors in cold weather.** Alcoholic beverages cause your body to lose heat faster.
- **Eat well-balanced meals and stay hydrated.** Doing this even before you go out in the cold will help you stay warm. And if you do become cold, drinking warm, sweet beverages, such as hot chocolate, will help you warm up.
- **Keep moving.** Exercise can get the blood flowing and help you stay warm, but don't do it to the point of exhaustion.

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