

North Country National Scenic Trail  
"TAILGATE SAFETY SERIES"



## HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia occurs when your core body temperature falls below normal. It can easily happen in cold winds or wetness. Hypothermia can also occur in moderately cool temperatures, particularly if coupled with dehydration. People tend to forget to drink on cool, wet days and can get hypothermic even when the temperature stays well above freezing.

- Symptoms of hypothermia include:
  - Slurred speech
  - Loss of coordination
  - Confusion
  - Apathy
  - Irrational behavior
  
- Your body automatically begins to shiver to warm itself. As your energy is used up to keep warm, you may reach a point where your body will be unable to warm itself. If left untreated, your body will gradually shut down and death becomes a possibility
  
- Avoid hypothermia with the following precautions:
  - Guard against dehydration
  - Avoid fatigue
  - Avoid cold winds
  - Take precautions to stay out of wet clothes
  - Be aware of hypothermia symptoms and take action upon their onset
  
- If you recognize hypothermia, take the following steps:
  - Move the victim to shelter/out of the wind
  - Remove wet clothes and replace them with warm, dry garments
  - If the victim is alert, give them warm liquids to drink

References:

Six Minutes for Safety, [http://www.nifc.gov/sixminutes/dsp\\_sixminutes.php](http://www.nifc.gov/sixminutes/dsp_sixminutes.php)