# Topic: Hypothermia

*Hypothermia comes with little warning. Be prepared for all types of weather conditions which could affect your body's temperature.*

**In what types of weather could you be stricken with hypothermia?**

**a)** Above freezing, **b)** Below freezing, **c)** Above zero,

**d)** Below zero, **e)** All of the above.

"All of the above" is the right answer. Most people never stop to think that body temperature can fall dangerously low even before the temperature outside hits the freezing mark. Here's how to avoid hypothermia:

If you know you will be out for some time in cold weather, arrange to eat often, drink often, and rest often. Food produces heat for your body. Fluids increase your blood volume, which means that your extremities will have better circulation.

Surprisingly, your body can demand more water in winter than in summer, says the *National Safety Council.* But skip the coffee and alcoholic drinks. Caffeine is a diuretic and will cause you to lose fluid. Alcohol opens the blood vessels in the skin, making you lose heat faster.

Eat food that is high in carbohydrates and sugar, such as energy bars and candy bars. Take time to rest. Working or playing in cold weather requires more frequent rest breaks.

**What to wear**

✚ Dress in layers to avoid frostbite and hypothermia. "Think VIP: ventilation, insulation and protection," says Dr. Charlotte Yeh, chief of emergency medicine at *New England Medical Center* in Boston.

✚ First comes a wicking layer to draw moisture away from the skin. Polypropylene or polyester are good choices. Stay away from cotton.

✚ Next, insulate your body. Wear wool or spun polyester, such as fleece. Both materials stay warm when wet and keep moisture from seeping through to the inner layer.

✚ Third, choose a water-and-wind-repellent material for the outer layer. The outer layer should have zippers and vents to help regulate temperature without having to add or remove clothing.

✚ Don't forget to layer your feet as well. Wear mittens instead of gloves, and always wear a warm hat.