8.Hypothermia



**Group size**

Whole group or small groups



**Suggested timing**

30 minutes

**Method**



Discussion and film

Learning objectives

**What you need**



**Hypothermia interactive activity (images and text) on the** [**hypothermia first aid skill page**](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/first-aid-skills/hypothermia/)

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**Learner skill guide ‘helping someone who has hypothermia’**

* Learn how to recognise when someone may have hypothermia.
* Learn the key action to help when someone may have hypothermia.

## Overview

Young people learn about hypothermia and what happens when someone is experiencing it. They then learn the steps to helping and the key action to take when someone has hypothermia.

## Preparation

Ensure you can access the First aid champions website and can move through the interactive activity on the [hypothermia first aid skill page](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/first-aid-skills/hypothermia/). Display or print off the Learner skill guide ‘helping someone who is has hypothermia’.

Familiarise learners with the ground rules for the session or establish ground rules. For guidance on how to do that, see the [Creating a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment guidance.](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/guidance-and-support/)

## How to run the activity

1. Ask young people:

* What is hypothermia?

*It is when someone’s body temperature gets very low due to being cold.*

* What happens when someone has hypothermia?

*They will be in a cold environment and will be cold to touch. They may also be shivering, pale and disoriented.*

* What feelings might there be when someone has hypothermia?

*It can be very worrying when someone has hypothermia. It is okay to feel worried, the most important thing to do is to recognise what is happening and to calmly help them.*

* What can you do to help someone who is has hypothermia?

*Explain that in the next part of the activity the group are going to learn how to help someone who has hypothermia.*

1. Now go to the [hypothermia first aid skill page](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/first-aid-skills/hypothermia/). Display the interactive activity on the web page, this will appear as a series of slides you can work through with the group. Alternatively, you could set the group up with individual or shared screens to work through the activity.
2. Display or direct the group to the confidence slider on the [hypothermia first aid skill page](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/first-aid-skills/hypothermia/), either setting this as an individual task or discussing as a group. How confident do learners feel to help someone who has hypothermia?
3. On the [hypothermia first aid skill page](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/first-aid-skills/hypothermia/), move through Michael’s story, displayed as a series of images and text. You could ask learners to read out the slides. After showing the story, ask young people:

* What was happening in Michael’s story? *They are on their Duke of Edinburgh expedition when Allanah falls into the lake.*
* How did they recognise Allanah had hypothermia? *She was shivering, pale and didn’t understand what has going on around her (disorientated).*
* How might they have felt? Think about the person who had hypothermia, the people who helped and anyone else nearby. *They might say things like worried, anxious but also things like safe, ready to help, confident.*
* What is the action that Michael and his friends took to help? *Called 999 and warmed Allanah up.*
* What were they good at? What qualities did they show? *They might say things like prepared, sensible, comforting.*

## *Logo Description automatically generated*Questions learners might ask

Learners might have questions about this skill. Remember to provide an anonymous question box for questions they wish to ask privately. The key skills are the most important things they should remember, but you can find some extra information which might help you answer their questions here:

* What if I don’t have a blanket?

*You can use any other material you have, like a coat or even plastic, cardboard or newspaper if that is all you have. Make sure you remove any layers of clothing that are wet. Ensure you cover their head. Do not take off your clothes, as you put yourself at risk then too.*

* If the person is outside, will they also get frostbite?

*Frostbite usually happens to fingers or toes in extreme cold conditions and is ​much less common than hypothermia. Fingers, toes or extremities become pale ​or blue and lose sensation and feeling. Gently warm their fingers and toes, such as with warm water, while waiting for help to arrive. Don’t try to thaw the affected boy part if there is any chance that it will refreeze (such as if you are staying outside in the cold).*

* Does alcohol work to heat you up if you are cold?

*No, although you might feel hot it actually allows heat to escape from your body. The symptoms of hypothermia (feeling disorientated) can also be mistaken for being drunk. Do not give the person alcohol.*

1. Display or hand out the Learner skill guide ‘helping someone who has hypothermia’. In small groups, or as a whole group look at the learner skill guide and discuss again some of the signs of hypothermia and the key actions to help.
2. Direct the group to the confidence slider on the [hypothermia first aid skill page](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/first-aid-skills/hypothermia/) and complete it again.
3. Check what learners have learned by doing the [hypothermia quiz](https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/secondary/quizzes/).

## Stretch and challenge activities:

1. Ask learners to explain or write down the key steps to help someone who has hypothermia. They could create a diagram to show what someone who has hypothermia might look like and the key actions someone helping should do.
2. Compare their work to the photos of the webpage, did they miss anything? Could they add details of how someone can help support the person who has hypothermia emotionally too.

## Summing up

* Remind the group that the most important thing to warm the person up.
* Now practise how to help someone who has hypothermia with the practise activity.