



## **Bakersfield Composite Squadron #121**

### **60-Second Safety Advisor #51**

#### **Cold Stress Injuries**

Did you know that cold stress, or "hypothermia," could occur any time of the year? In fact, most cases of cold stress develop in air temperatures between 30 and 50 degrees Fahrenheit. People who are exposed to lower temperatures are at risk for injuries ranging from frostbite to serious loss of body heat, which could result in brain damage or death.

There are some things you can do to protect yourself from cold stress injuries. First, Dress warmly, in layers. Preserving an air space between the body and the outer layer of clothing will help retain body heat. Choose fabrics such as cotton or wool, which insulate but also allow sweat to evaporate. It is especially important to protect the feet, hands, head, and face. These parts of the body are farthest from the heart and are the hardest to keep warm. Almost half your body heat can be lost through the head, so cover it up as well. Keep dry. Wetness greatly increases the chance of cold stress. Take a break. If you become fatigued during physical activity, your body loses its ability to properly retain heat. This causes rapid cooling which can quickly lead to cold stress. Eat right. A proper diet provides your body with the nutrients it needs to withstand the cold. These guidelines along with some common sense will help you to avoid cold stress injuries.

