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PEQUOT PHARMACEUTICAL NETWORK • PHARMACY NEWSLETTER

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Winter Safety Tips Frostbite

What is frostbite? Frostbite occurs when skin and underlying tissues freeze due to exposure to freezing temperatures.

Symptoms may include: pain, numbness, swelling, blisters and skin discoloration. It can lead to permanent damage to the affected areas.

Frostbite prevention tips:

- #1. Limit outdoor time. Avoid being outside in freezing temperatures for more than 10-15 minutes when it is cold and wet.
- #2. Pay attention to temperature forecasts and windchill readings
- #3. Stay dry as wet clothing can increase the risk of frostbite
- #4. Be aware of symptoms of frostbite such as numbness and discoloration

Frostbite immediate first-aid and treatment:

- *Move to safety: Get to a warm/dry place
- *Remove Restrictions: Remove any wet/tight clothing or jewelry
- *Warm water soaks: immerse affected areas in warm (not hot) water 100-105 degrees.
- *Body Heat: Use skin to skin contact to try to warm the affected areas (fingertips under armpits)
- *DO NOT RUB: Never rub or massage the area as this causes tissue damage
- *Avoid Direct Heat: Do not use fires, blow dryers or heating pads as this can damage the numb areas
- *Do not walk on frostbitten feet or toes
- *Take over the counter pain relievers such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen to help with any pain during the thawing process
- **Seek medical attention for any troublesome or significant cold injuries

There are 3 stages of frostbite:

- #1. Frostnip- The first stage which is minor, with cold, red and numb skin that does not cause permanent damage.
- #2. Superficial Frostbite: The second stage where the skin turns pale or red, stings, burns, or feels warm. Blisters can develop 12-36 hours after thawing.
- #3. Deep frostbite: The final stage that affects all layers of skin and underlying tissue. Skin may turn white or gray and feel numb or hard.

At Pequot Health Care, we are dedicated to maintaining your good health!



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