

Best practices:

Preparing for winter sports emergencies

Winter sports offer an excellent way to stay engaged in sport and training, while allowing us to enjoy our natural environment. When planning to play in the elements, it is essential that we take the proper steps in preparing for emergencies that might arise. Extreme temperatures, sudden weather changes, precipitation and wind can wreak havoc on an athlete if not properly prepared. Frost-Nip, Frost-Bite, and Hypothermia are examples of cold environment conditions that can be prevented with proper preparation.

The following steps can be taken to help reduce the likelihood of injury or emergency situations:

- ❑ Be prepared for the weather - know the forecast and prepare for the worst.
- ❑ Always tell someone where you are going.
- ❑ Wear appropriate layers - choose thin, moisture wicking materials for base layers to allow for our bodies to eliminate heat through sweat, while pulling moisture away from the body. Keeping your head warm is also crucial to maintaining body temperature.
- ❑ Choose a correctly fitted helmet to protect you from head injury and to keep your head warm and dry.
- ❑ Stay hydrated! It is important to continue to replace fluids lost through sweat and respiration in cold weather.
- ❑ Protect your skin from prolonged exposure to cold temperatures and wind.
- ❑ Watch for Frost-Nip and Frost-Bite on your nose, cheeks, ears, fingers and toes. Check your skin regularly, and if signs appear, remove yourself from the cold and treat the area by rewarming with warm direct pressure.



What to bring to be prepared for emergencies:

- ✓ Full change of clothing
- ✓ Warm blanket
- ✓ Hot beverage in a thermos
- ✓ Extra food
- ✓ Head lamp or flashlight
- ✓ Lighter or water-proof matches
- ✓ Shovel and saw to remove snow
- ✓ First-aid kit
- ✓ Area map
- ✓ Fully charged cell phone

If you have more questions about how you can prepare for winter sports emergencies, be sure to ask ePACT on Twitter at [@ePACTNetwork](https://twitter.com/ePACTNetwork).

Looking for more great resources from ePACT and ViaSport? Check out our toolkits at viasport.ca/epact-toolkit