



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Summit County Public Health would like to remind
Summit County residents to protect themselves from extreme cold**

AKRON, OHIO, Summit County Public Health (SCPH) would like to take this opportunity to remind Summit County residents to take precautions to avoid extreme cold related health issues and to monitor themselves for signs and symptoms of cold related health issues. Cold related health issues can affect anyone but some people are at higher risk than others. Individuals at higher risk include the elderly, the very young, those who work outside, those with chronic medical conditions and those who drink alcohol or use illicit drugs. In extreme cold temperatures try to stay indoors. If you must go outside dress properly and know the signs and symptoms of hypothermia and frostbite.

Practicing tips for staying healthy during extreme cold is important. The common-sense practices listed below should be followed along with knowing the signs and symptoms of cold related health issues:

- Be sure to cover all exposed skin that is most often affected by frostbite including nose, ears, toes, cheeks, chin and fingers with warm, dry clothing.
- Make sure to wear multiple layers of dry, loose fitting clothes.
- When going outside make sure to wear a scarf or knit mask, hat, water resistant coat, gloves and water resistant boots.
- If you don't have to go out, stay indoors.
- Avoid strenuous activities as much as possible.
- Come inside often to warm up if working outdoors.
- Do not put babies to sleep in cold rooms
- Bring pets in from outside.
- Never leave any person or pet in a parked vehicle.
- Visit or frequently check on: people over age 65, the frail or elderly who have a chronic medical condition (such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, obesity, high blood pressure, liver disease, kidney disease) and individuals who suffer from a mental illness (cognitive and psychiatric disorders.)

The expected Cold Wave has already prompted Akron to extend its hours at Summit Lake Community Center at 380 West Crosier St. starting Sunday through Wednesday. The center will be open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. for residents to have a warm place to seek shelter during the day.

Akron says the [Emergency Overnight Shelter](#) at 111 East Voris St. will open Saturday and remain open through Wednesday. The hours are 7 p.m. to 8 a.m. Additional warming centers may open up throughout Summit County. Check with your local municipalities for more information.



It is also important to recognize the signs and symptoms of cold related health issues. Most people are unaware of frostbite because frozen tissue is numb so recognizing the early warning signs is very important.

Frost Bite

Warning signs include:

- Redness or pain in any skin area
- White or grayish-yellow skin area
- Skin that feels unusually firm or waxy
- Numbness

Hypothermia is caused by prolonged exposure to extremely cold temperatures, but can also happen at cool temperatures, if a person is wet and becomes chilled.

Hypothermia

Warning signs include:

- Shivering
- Exhaustion
- Confusion
- Fumbling Hands
- Memory Loss
- Slurred speech
- Drowsiness

Infant Signs and Symptoms of Hypothermia:

- Bright red, cold skin
- Very low energy

If a person is experiencing frostbite or hypothermia:

- Seek medical attention as soon as possible.
- Move them into a warm room or shelter.
- Remove any wet clothing.
- Warm them under layers of dry blankets and clothing.
- Place areas affected by frostbite in warm to the touch water/do not use HOT water!

If a person is experiencing frostbite DO NOT:

- Do not walk on frostbitten toes or feet unless necessary.
- Do not use a heat lamp, fireplace, radiator or stove for warming.
- Do not use a heating pad or electric blanket for warming.
- Do not rub or massage areas with frostbite.

For more information regarding extreme cold related health issues visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/winter-weather/about/index.html> or
<https://www.scph.org>