

COLD - RELATED EMERGENCIES

UNIVERSAL ALGORITHM

- Scene Safety
- PPE
- ABCs
- Administer Oxygen per Policy 580

- Remove patient from cold environment
- Prevent further heat loss or injury
- Check vital signs, especially pulse, for at least 30-45 seconds – a hypothermic patient may have a slow, weak pulse
- Remove wet clothing and jewelry as appropriate
- Rewarm hypothermic patient with blankets, warm environment. Avoid rough handling of patient which may precipitate arrhythmias
- Rewarming of Frostbitten extremities – consider only if evacuation not possible for 6-12 hours
 - If patient is not hypothermic, sufficient supply of warm water is available, and there is no risk of refreezing: Use 102-104 degree water, immerse until limb is soft, pink, pliable and painful
 - After re-warming, place gauze between digits and dress extremity, splint as needed
- Transport as soon as possible