



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES PROGRAM

Protocol No. E2
April 1, 2012

Emergency Medical Services Program

Approved

Medical Director

Subject: COLD EXPOSURE/HYPOTHERMIA

I. BLS Treatment Protocol:

- A. Treat life threats. (See Policy 4000)
- B. Implement warming measures but avoid aggressive external rewarming for pulseless patients.
- C. Prepare for transport / transfer of care.

II. ALS Treatment Protocol: (Moderate Hypothermia* to Severe Hypothermia)**

- A. Treat life threats. (See Policy 4000)
- B. Continue warming measures.
- C. Transport.
- D. Contact Base Station.

Notes:

If patient is pulseless, defibrillate as you would a normothermic patient; however, only a single round of drugs should be administered.

***Moderate Hypothermia-** No shivering, decreased LOC, atrial fibrillation, bradycardia, hypoventilation, dilated pupils, bright pink to pale skin, ventricular fibrillation susceptibility.

****Severe Hypothermia:** Muscle tone resembling rigor mortis, apneic, comatose, ventricular fibrillation or asystole, dilated and fixed pupils, skin is edematous and face is swollen.

Avoid rough movement and excess activity. Stimulation of the patient could significantly cause deterioration of vital signs.