

Hypothermia – the Chill the Kills

Lesson from Shageluk

Now that you know a few facts about hypothermia, can you apply what you've learned?

SITUATION: Your family has driven to a fishing camp in Ontario. Sioux Lookout, the nearest town with a hospital, is about 100 miles or two hours away. Your cabin is primitive – there is a woodstove for heat but no lights or running water. It's a beautiful day, about 72 degrees, very little wind but a few clouds are on the horizon. Your Dad's ready to go fishing, you and your younger brother go along. Before getting in the boat, you stuff your rain suit and a couple of candy bars into your backpack. Before pushing off your Dad tells the camp owner where he plans to fish. You've heard the big ones are really biting but the spot's a long distance from camp!

Fishing is good but the sky is getting darker, it's getting cooler and the wind is picking up. It begins to mist then rain. You decide to put your rain suit on and have a snack. Your Dad and brother keep on fishing not concerned about getting wet. It's raining harder and it's getting colder and the wind keeps blowing. You notice that your little brother is shivering. He's mumbling and grumbling about not having any bites while you and your Dad are. He finally gets a bite but doesn't seem to care whether he lands the fish or not.

Finally it quits raining but the wind continues to blow and it seems to be getting colder. Now even your Dad is shivering. Your brother fumbles during a cast and drops his pole, nearly losing it in the lake. He's having trouble on almost every cast. He doesn't have his limit but he gives up fishing to sit and shiver. It begins to rain again. Now your Dad is mumbling and grumbling too. You'd like to go back to camp. It's a long way and it'll be windy and rough.

Finally your Dad says it's time to go. He fumbles around trying to get the motor started. He stands up, stumbles and nearly falls overboard. You look at your poor little brother; he's still shivering and really pale. Suddenly it hits you - your Dad and brother have **HYPOTHERMIA!** You studied this last winter in school during the Iditarod. What can you do to help your brother and Dad?

Write an essay to explain what you have learned about hypothermia. Create an introductory paragraph. Then include a paragraph listing the signs and symptoms of hypothermia. Write a third paragraph telling what could have been done differently to avoid hypothermia. Write a fourth paragraph defining the First Aid you'd give. Finally, come up with a plan to get yourself, your Dad and your brother back to the fishing camp safely. Your final paragraph should conclude your essay. Your paragraphs must each have a topic sentence followed by information or the action you'd take. If you wish, create an outline before beginning to write.