

Frozen\_What\_To\_Do\_2004.txt

From: hall@macs.mxim.com (Hal Lillywhite)  
Newsgroups: misc.survivalism  
Subject: Frozen Body Parts (was Winter Bathing ?)  
Date: 14 Nov 1995 07:07:37 -0800

In article <1995Nov14.033229.29291@lamont.lldgo.columbia.edu> mcdaniel  
<hmcom@eskimo.com> writes:

By the way, if part of your body freezes and there's no hospital around... better get out the hacksaw. I wonder if applying ice to most of the frozen parts while, warming the rest a tiny bit at a time would work... Probably would hurt too much to find out... ????

Whoa!!! Where did you get this? Of course treating frozen body parts is best done in a hospital. However lack of such facilities is not necessarily an amputation sentence. Actually the treatment is rather simple and mostly consists of preventing contamination and providing support. There are several books which describe this, the one I have is Hypothermia, Frostbite and Other Cold Injuries by Wilkenson, Bangs and Hayward, published by the Mountaineers in Seattle.

In brief:

1. Do not thaw any frozen foot if the victim will have to walk out of the situation. It is possible to walk on a frozen foot but not on one which has been frozen and thawed (at least until recovery is well underway, several weeks).
2. Be very careful removing shoes and socks, avoid damaging fragile skin.
3. Thaw in salt water, about 105 degrees F. I don't remember the exact concentration but probably about a tablespoon of salt per gallon. It should be about as salty as tears. As the water cools you will need to rewarm it, be careful when you do so. The best

method is to remove the feet and get it back to the right temperature. Preferably have two baths, one to be rewarmed while the frozen part is in the other.

4. Protect from contamination during the recovery time. Cover with moist, sterile dressings. Obviously the patient will not be able to use the part during this time which means no walking if the feet were involved.

5. Continually reassure the patient. The body part will look \*UGLY\*!!! So much so that some patients have insisted on amputation when the doctor believed recovery was possible.

Whatever you do, do not expose frozen body parts to dry heat!!! The above mentioned book has some really ugly pictures of the results.