

# what's happening

Maine Medical Center  
Portland, Maine 04102

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## Winter sports call for measure of care

If there is a hypothermia season, this is it. Hypothermia -- an abnormal cooling of the body's core temperature -- can happen at any time of the year, but is most common in the depths of winter. Every year at this time, Maine Medical Center treats a number of cases ranging from mild to severe. Many, many more cases are probably averted by the body's involuntary responses to cold and by prompt corrective action by potential victims.

The hypothermia cases receiving the most public attention usually involve fishermen and mountain climbers rescued by major search and rescue operations. It can happen to anyone, though, according to MMC Chief of Emergency Medicine Frank Lawrence, M.D. "Anyone who ventures into the outdoors without being properly prepared and knowledgeable about their activity," he says, "risks running afoul of the hazardous combination of cold/wind/wet/physical exhaustion/panic."

"Skiers, skaters, hunters, fishermen, snowmobilers, hikers, and others are vulnerable if they are not properly equipped," Lawrence continues, "if they become isolated, injured, stranded, or immobile. Even in summer, a hiker who becomes lost, falls in a brook, and spends a night in 40°F temperatures with a 20 mph wind is in great danger."

Whoever the victim, the physiology of hypothermia is the same: the body, in response to low temperatures, first initiates a number of *homeostatic* mechanisms. These may include shivering, an involuntary action designed to stimulate warmth, and unconscious or semi-conscious actions like rubbing the hands together. If this fails, the body responds with the protective measure of restricting blood flow in the extremities, thus keeping the vital organs in the body core warm and



**CROSS COUNTRY SKIING** is healthy and enjoyable with proper knowledge and equipment, and about 80 MMC people learned the basics of the sport when L.L. Bean's Phil Savignano visited MMC January 11. At the invitation of *HealthStyles*, he talked about equipment, technique, and trails. Above, a skier strides along the Western Promenade. (A/V Photo)

reducing heat loss to the outside. If the exposure to cold continues, the body's core temperature begins to drop.

The progress of hypothermia is insidious, particularly in the active person outdoors. A drop in core temperature of about 2°F (normal core temperature is about 99.6°F) generates shivering and other homeostatic responses. If the temperature continues to drop, body systems begin to slow down, causing confusion, slurred speech, awkwardness, and reduced cardiac function. The victim loses consciousness as the core temperature drops to the upper 80's, and assumes the appearance of death, with rigidity, undetectable heartbeat, and dilated pupils among the signs. Cardiac arrest may occur below

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MEDICAL SERVICES  
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

## 28th Annual Meeting

February 11, 1984

Verrillo's Restaurant

Social Hour 6:30 - 7:30 PM

Dinner, Business Meeting,  
and Dancing to "City Magic"  
to follow

Tickets available  
at the MSFCU office

Members \$8.00

Guests \$9.00



**WINTER**, from page one

86°F, and all cardiac activity stops as the temperature drops below 70°F.

Treatment depends on the severity of the hypothermia. In mild cases, a warm room is enough to revive the victim. For this reason, one of the Trauma Rooms in MMC's Emergency Department is fitted with a massive heater which can bring the temperature of the room up to 90°F in just a few minutes. For a moderately hypothermic person, an active external rewarming technique or a combination of external and internal rewarming techniques are employed.

Severely hypothermic patients require specialized treatment by an experienced team of physicians and the other resources of a tertiary care hospital. If such a patient is rewarmed externally, the cold, acidic blood produced in the extremities is sent to the body core, with shock the usual result. Core rewarming involves the insertion of tubes intravenously and into the body cavities, and the infusion of saline solution.

The most extreme treatment for severely hypothermic patients involves connecting them to a heart-lung bypass machine and rewarming the blood externally as it passes through the machine. MMC has the only such machine in Maine, and this is a major reason the worst cases come here.

Because MMC is a referral hospital, and is near the ocean, mountains, and any number of outdoor recreation areas, it has a special interest in hypothermia. Some four dozen cases have come to the Emergency Department in the last few years. By reviewing those cases and as many others from medical literature, Dr. Lawrence and Dave Johnson, Assistant Supervisor of the Regional Emergency Medical Information System at MMC, developed an innovative clinical tool called the Hypothermia Survival Index.

The HSI scoring system, the topic of a paper now under review by the *Annals of Emergency Medicine*, predicts with a high degree of accuracy the potential for survival in hypothermia cases. It is based on clinical findings within the first hour of emergency room treatment, such as presence and duration of cardiac arrest, core temperature, underlying medical disorders or trauma, serum potassium levels, and metabolic and radiographic abnormalities. The HSI is a clinical tool only, but it may help systematize knowledge about hypothermia.

## There's no trick to taking care

"The easiest way to become a victim of hypothermia is to be unprepared," Dr. Lawrence says. "That means you need to be prepared in terms of both knowledge and equipment." Factors to consider:

- **water**, which conducts body heat an incredible 32 times faster than air. Avoiding immersion in water and being soaked by rain, snow, or perspiration is essential.
- **wind**, which magnifies the chilling effect of the air. At 30°F, for instance, a wind of only 20 mph creates an actual temperature of 4°F.
- **caloric intake**. People exerting themselves outdoors need plenty of food to keep the body well fueled for activity which aids heat production.
- **hydration**. The same advice applies to water: drink it, warmed if possible, in amounts adequate to result in good urine flow.
- **cigarettes**, which decrease blood flow to the extremities, and **alcohol**, which does the opposite and thereby creates a false feeling of warmth.
- **proper clothing**, including the all-important hat. 50%-70% of total body heat loss occurs from the head and neck when the rest of the body is clothed.
- **weather**, which can change dramatically and dangerously very quickly, especially in the mountains

and on the ocean.

- **fatigue**. Be aware of your limitations and the task to be done or distance to be traveled.
- **vigilance**. Staying aware of your condition and that of your companions is one of the best ways to avoid trouble. Watch for shivering, stumbling, sleepiness, incoherence, and confusion.

In a case of mild hypothermia, the victim must be brought to a warm location if the addition of clothing doesn't help. In moderate hypothermia, heat must be supplied. One of the best ways is to get the victim in a sleeping bag with another person. In severe hypothermia, CPR if indicated and fast medical attention are essential.

"I love the outdoors and wouldn't want to scare anyone else away from enjoying it," says Dr. Lawrence who is involved in mountaineering and in Outward Bound. "But at the same time, I've seen the results of people without proper equipment or knowledge attempting an outdoor activity. If you're going to be outdoors, and especially if you're going to place yourself at risk of being isolated, exposed to severe weather, or perhaps being lost overnight, you have a responsibility to be properly trained and equipped. Your enjoyment and safety, and the safety of those who might have to rescue you, are at stake."

## Bride Memorial Fund aids health program

President Edward C. Andrews, Jr., M.D., recently announced receipt of a gift of \$1,000 from the Bride Charitable Foundation, made in memory of William T. and Elsie F. Bride, to establish the "Bride Memorial Fund" in support of MMC's "employee health promotion program." Specifically, this program promotes supervised exercise and health education; gifts to the Bride Memorial Fund will be used to help subsidize the cost of employees' participation, payment for speakers at educational programs, educational materials, and so forth. Anyone wishing further information or desiring to make a gift to support this program is invited to contact Mr. Baril in the Personnel Office or Mr. Barnard in the Development Office.

## New Employees

**NURSING:** Ann M. Carr, Molly C. Doddo, Liana R. Ferris, Janene S. Gorham, Gretchen R. Green, Deborah E. Hyde, Margo L. Kellar, Kathryn J. Laming, Janice Levis, Kathleen Montanese, Anthony T. Otis, Cheryl L. Pawloski, Sally A. Queen, Martha E. Van Tassel, Mary C. Webster

**CARDIAC SURGERY:** John E. Cormack  
**PHYSICAL THERAPY:** Mary J. Finck, Rosemarie M. Wagner

**CARDIOGRAPHY:** Stanley W. Fortuna  
**MATERIALS MANAGEMENT:** Thomas R. Guare

**PULMONARY MEDICINE:** Daniel S. Millar

**HEART CATHETERIZATION:** Wendy L. Redmond

**HOUSEKEEPING:** Charlene R. Rubito, Daniel G. Rubito





**DEBORAH COLE, RN, a January Graduate of MMC's School of OR Nursing, receives her diploma from Catherine Cohen, RN, Director of OR Nursing. Looking on is Maureen Bien, RN, Assistant Education Coordinator. An MMC Staff Nurse, Cole is the fourth graduate of the program. (A/V Photo)**

## Report says health has improved in U.S.

Findings in a federal report released last week indicate that the health of the American people as a whole has improved. "Health -- United States" was released at a press conference by Health and Human Services Secretary Margaret M. Heckler, and among the major findings were:

- Infant mortality has declined, from 14.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1977 to 11.2 in 1982.
- The death rate for children ages 1 - 14 dropped, from 43 per 100,000 in 1977 to 36 per 100,000 in 1982.
- The death rate for those aged 15 - 24 declined, from 117 per 100,000 to 105 per 100,000.
- The death rate for those 25 - 64 fell, from 540 per 100,000 to 463 per 100,000.
- The only area in which progress was not shown was for the elderly. The report indicates that the statistics used to measure progress may be wrong.
- Average life expectancy reached 74.5 years in 1982. For women, the figure is 78.2 years, for men 70.8 years.

At the same news conference,

Secretary Heckler pointed out the report's finding that health care expenditures were at an all-time high of \$33.4 billion in 1982, about 10.5% of the gross national product.

The average per person cost of health care in 1982, the results of which are reflected in the statistics above? \$1,365.

The report also points out that the key to continued improvements in the statistics is improvement in environmental and lifestyle factors. Heart disease is still the leading cause of death, accounting for about one-third of all deaths in 1982.

## More Marketplace

**WINTER POTTERY CLASSES:** Children's, 6 weeks, 6 students per class. \$40.00, all materials and firings included. 3:30-5:30 PM, Tuesdays 1/24 - 3/6 and Wednesdays 1/25 - 3/7. Adult classes, 10 weeks, 6 students, beginner - intermediate. \$95.00, all materials and firings included. 7 - 10 PM, Wednesdays 1/25 - 3/28. Call Toby Rosenberg 772-0491 or 772-9252 (let it ring).

**WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY AND PORTRAITS:** Call Don Brown at 865-6071 eves.

## Time is running out for your old stickers

Remember, new MMC parking stickers must be in place -- the lower left-hand corner of your windshield -- by January 31. Everyone who currently holds a sticker has received a new one, and additional stickers are available from the Parking Office. After January 31, the new stickers will be required for entrance to the Parking Ramp.

## Estate Planning is topic of MMC seminar

Once again, the MMC Deferred Giving Committee is pleased to announce a special seminar, "The Elements of Estate Planning," to be presented Saturday, February 4, at Maine Medical Center.

The volunteer faculty includes four members of the Deferred Giving Committee: Judith M. Coburn, Esq.; Frank H. Frye, Esq.; Richard P. LeBlanc, Esq.; and H. Davison Osgood, Jr., Esq., Chairman of the Committee.

The program will be presented in Classrooms 3 & 4, beginning with coffee and registration at 9:30 AM and extending through a morning session from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon, an informal sandwich luncheon, a second session from 12:30 to 1:30 PM, and a final question and answer period from 1:30 to 2:00 PM. Topics include "The Mechanics of Wills and Trusts," "The Basic Principles of Taxation" (Gift Tax and Estate Tax), and "Case Studies."

The seminar is open to the public without fee, on an advance reservation basis. Space is limited to 125 seats, and reservations are made on a first-come, first-served basis. Those interested should contact the Development Office before the deadline, January 30, at 120 West Street, or call at 871-2669.

## Nursing Continuing Education Program

- *Critical Care Seminar: Making Quality Care a Reality: A Program for Staff Nurses*, Lois Bazinet, RN, CCRN, Ginny Erickson, RN, and Peggy Halpin, RN, CCRN.

Thursday, February 2, 1984  
8-9 AM and repeated 2-3 PM  
Conf. Room R9  
(1 CERP requested)



# Marketplace

**FOR RENT:** Bramhall area, 1st floor. 5 rooms and KT. Hardwood floors. Recently renovated. 2 porches and parking. \$350/mo. plus util. Call 775-0532.

**FOR RENT:** Modern 2 room efficiency. Appliances. Walk to MMC. \$240/mo. plus util. Call for showing and ask for Martha 854-2327 or Russ at 775-1944.

**FOR RENT:** House in Gray. 2 BR, large KT, LR, full day-light basement, close to turnpike exit for easy commute. Call R. Brookes at 657-3201 after 6 PM or 797-7261 days. \$350/mo. plus heat and util.

**FOR RENT:** Large private home on the ocean in Yarmouth. 4 BRs, wood stove, good roommate set-ups. \$1,500/mo. plus util. Call Dianna at 846-3766.

**FOR RENT:** Sugarloaf USA, chalet by week or weekend, all facilities. Call 797-0170 eves.

**FOR RENT:** 5 room sunny Victorian, hardwood floors, fireplace, sun porch. 4 blocks from MMC. \$550/mo. heated. Call 775-1910.

**FOR RENT:** Room. Meals avail. if necessary. Price negotiable. On lake. Mr. and Mrs. John Conant, Raymond. Call 655-4393.

**FREE RENT:** in ocean view apt. in Cape Elizabeth in exchange for 1+ hours assistance in the evening. Call 799-0368.

**ROOMMATE WANTED:** Female, 23-35 yrs. old to share lake home in Windham. 30 min. to MMC. Use of garage, garden, yard, lake and laundry. Non-smoker. \$250/mo. Call Jean at 892-5480 or 774-3491.

**ROOMMATES WANTED:** One male, one female. Brand new 3 BR apt. \$50 each per mo., heat included. Inquire at 9 Wescott St., Apt. 2F after 6 PM.

**ROOMMATE WANTED:** To share apt. near MMC. Reasonable rate. Call 774-9085 after 5 PM.

**FOR SALE:** 1981 Chevette 4DR hatchback. Standard 4-speed, one owner, no rust. Texas car, cloth seats. Excellent miles per gallon. 40,000 miles. \$3,895. Call 883-2706 after 5 PM.

**FOR SALE:** 1975 Chevy Impala, well maintained, excellent running condition. Asking \$1,200. Call 799-0170.

**FOR SALE:** 1978 Toyota Corona station wagon; 5-speed, AM/FM radio, cassette, luggage rack, trailer hitch, radial tires, needs some body work, good condition, \$71,114 miles. Asking \$1,000. Call 761-0652 after 6:30 PM.

**FOR SALE:** 1975 Honda Civic 5-speed. \$900 or best offer. Will negotiate. Call 929-5754.

**FOR SALE:** 1980 Lincoln Continental Mark III. Excellent cond., needs nothing. \$5,800 or best offer. Contact Dr. Madigan at x2571 or 774-4442 eves.

**FOR SALE:** 1980 Datsun 310, 2-door hatchback, front wheel drive, 4-speed, AM/FM 8 track stereo. 4 new radials, well maintained, 54,000 miles. \$3,750. Call 799-6863 after 4 PM.

**FOR SALE:** 17' fiberglass boat with 40-horse Evinrude electric start outboard on a Holsclaw tilt trailer, 2 gas tanks, battery and battery case included. \$1,950. Call 799-6863 after 4 PM.

**FOR SALE:** Woodstoves, Portland Stove Foundry, Atlantic #224 and Atlantic #228. Both in good working condition. Best offers. Call 799-3892.

**FOR SALE:** Pa's firewood, guaranteed all hardwood, good measure, written receipts, references, cut, split, delivered, 20 mile radius from woodlot. 16", 22" and 24" \$80 per cord and 4', \$60 per cord. Call 892-6351 or 655-7745.

**FOR SALE:** Walnut entertainment center. 42" high, 23" wide, 16" deep. Three adjustable shelves with glass door. In excellent condition, \$100. Call 892-4771 after 5 PM, anytime on weekends.

**FOR SALE:** Girls' roller skates, sizes 1 and 2, \$5 per pair. Call 797-8900.

## what's happening

WHAT'S HAPPENING is published every Wednesday at Maine Medical Center, Portland, Maine for members of the Hospital community and for friends of the institution throughout Maine and northern New England. Comments, questions and suggestions may be addressed to Public Information Office, MMC, Portland, ME 04102. Barbara Burns, Editor.

Contributors to this issue:

Wayne L. Clark, Public Information  
Lidia Conti, Public Information  
Douglas C. Burger, A/V Resources  
Larry Gorton, A/V Resources  
Charlotte Hurd, A/V Resources  
Judy MacKenzie, A/V Resources  
Leigh Whittemore, A/V Resources  
George A. Drew, Print Shop  
Henry J. Guiod, Jr., Print Shop  
Jim Stewart, Print Shop

**FOR SALE:** 3/4 winter wool coat with detachable fur collar and fur cuffs, size 8/10, \$20. Excellent condition camel double-breasted coat, size 10, \$20. Full-length maroon wool wrap coat, good condition, \$20. Ski boots, navy blue, 5-clamp, by Dunham, like new plus boot tree, size 7. \$40. Call 772-5103.

**FOR SALE:** 1 pr. of Altec Lansing speakers Nine series II, 3-way system 250 watts each. Just like new, \$475. 1 Hedstrom carriage, green velvet. Very good condition, \$45. Call 774-6451 after 2 PM.

**FOR SALE:** Refrigerator, Whirlpool, single door with freezer section inside, \$50. Call 773-5406 after 4 PM.

**WANTED:** Claw-foot bathtub in good condition. Call 775-3064.

**WANTED:** Ski rack for VW bug, and size 8 women's downhill ski boots. Call 767-3965 eves.

**WANTED:** Used baby furniture in good condition. Call 775-3064.

**WANTED:** Babysitter for 1½ yr. old. 2-3 days per week from 2:30 - 6:30 PM. Call 799-2059.

**WANTED:** Part-time babysitter needed for 2 mo. old afternoons 1-5 PM in my home near MMC. \$2 per hr. Transportation provided. References required. Call 772-8447 for interview.

**WANTED:** Mature woman for occasional babysitting. Deering Highlands area. Call 775-7285.

**GETTING MARRIED?** Have your gown custom made. Call 725-6759 weekdays after 7 PM, anytime on week-ends.

**PAINTING AND WALLPAPERING:** Estimates and references. Call Joe at 773-0934.

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