

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is the condition in which an organism's temperature drops below that required for normal metabolism and bodily functions. Hypothermia can result in three stages of severity.

Stage 1; The body temperature drops by 1.8-3.6 degrees. The body starts to shiver and the hands become numb.

Stage 2; The body temperature drops by 3.8-7.6 degrees. The shivering becomes more violent. Movements are slow and labored, accompanied by stumbling pace and mild confusion.

Stage 3; The body temperature drops below approximately 89.6 degrees. The subject has difficulty speaking, sluggish thinking and amnesia will start to appear. Major organs fail and the subject may die.

On Sunday, October 12, 2008, I left Prescott at 6:00 AM on my Gold Wing to ride to Mesa for the Ride for Kid's. As I was riding up the Prescott Lakes Parkway the temperature was 21 degrees and I was warm. On the National Weather Service Wind-chill Chart the wind chill was -3 degrees. When I got to Mesa the temperature was in the low 70s. This is the time of year that we have to prepare ourselves for any riding condition and temperature. My method is to layer what I am wearing. I like to be nice and warm and I don't want to get into stage 1.

The jacket has to be wind proof and have cuffs that will keep out the cold air. A jacket with a removal liner will add to your layering and be more comfortable when the temperature warms up. Layers closest to your skin can be made of your favorite wicking material. (Coolmax, polypropylene, even wool) It is best to keep your skin dry as possible in the cold or you'll get clammy and miserably cold. I wear a sweater made of Polartex under my jacket and a denim shirt under it. There are a number of items you can find at your local camping outfitters store that you can use when riding in cold weather.

I get kidded because I have heated hand grips on my Gold Wing. "Why do you need heated grips in Arizona? Very heavy gloves or mittens make using the controls on the Wing difficult. With the heated grips I can wear gloves that are not bulky and yet my hands are warm.

Scarves or a facemask will keep the cold air off your neck and face. Warm socks are a must to keep your feet warm.

I wear "Draggin Jeans" and they keep me warm behind the Wing's fairing. The "Kevlar" in the knees and seat not only protect you when you should go down from road rash, but "Kevlar" acts as insulation against heat or cold.

"KEEP THE RUBBER SIDE DOWN"

Dick Studdard, .