

# Safety Alert - Not Getting Cold at Heads

It is the season for head races, but this need not mean that it is the season to wait on the water for the start getting colder and colder. There is a lot that you and others can do to avoid this.

**Rowers** can help themselves by:

- Getting to the start in time for their division, not early and not late
- Wearing the right clothes at the right time
- Remember the acronym **C O L D**
  - C - Keep clothing **Clean**
  - O - Avoid **Overheating** (if you sweat, you will make your base layers damp)
  - L - Wear clothes **Loose** and in **Layers**
  - D - Keep clothing **Dry** (damp base layers conduct heat away from your body)
- If it is wet then wear a waterproof (preferably breathable) outer layer
- Carry a waterproof bag for the kit that you are not wearing
- Do not wear all your clothing as you paddle to the start, (avoid overheating) keep some for the time when you will be waiting
- Wear a hat and gloves while you are waiting
- Put your extra kit on at the end of the race
- Don't forget about hydration, it is often dry when it is very cold

**Rowers** can help themselves and each other by:

- Being aware of the symptoms of mild hypothermia
- Behavioural Symptoms, complains of feeling cold and tired, poor comprehension, and concentration, disorientation, irrational behaviour, violent outbursts, and confusion
- Physical symptoms, shivering, pale, blue lips and nails, rapid breathing, wheezing and coughing, fast pulse and slurred speech
- Checking for these symptoms in themselves and their colleagues
- Starting mild exercise and offer spare clothing, if they notice these symptoms

**Coaches** can help by:

- Being familiar with the information in the Cold Water and Hypothermia on-line module at <http://www.rowhow.org/mod/scorm/view.php?id=3167>
- Helping their crews to understand this information
- Getting their crews to the start in time for their division, not early and not late

**Event Organisers** can help by:

- Scheduling races so as to minimise the time spent waiting
- Ensuring that races and divisions start at the right time
- Marshalling crews to get afloat and clear the launch area quickly
- Encouraging crews to go afloat at the right time so that they do not have to wait

**Remember; rowing is supposed to be enjoyable  
look after yourself and your friends**

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