Baby, it’s Cold Outside! Part One.

It’s winter sports time, whether you’re doing Alpine off-piste skiing or just heading out the back door to have a snowball fight.

Hypothermia is the Killer of the Unprepared. And before it kills you, hypothermia makes you clumsy and then stupid so you’re more likely to kill yourself other ways, too. A couple of winters ago I discussed hypothermia and winter clothing, but now I want to reinforce this with a different and more graphical presentation. The graphics are mostly from Gene Fear, who was a great survival educator.

- **Hypothermia** = low (hypo-) temperature
  (-therm-) condition (-ia)

- Hypothermia is when the body gets chilled -- not just the skin and muscles, but deep inside.

- **Heat Balance**
  - The body produces heat continuously; this production of heat must be balanced by an equal heat loss to keep the body temperature from going up or down.
  - The body temperature must be kept within a narrow range for vital chemical processes to work
  - use clothing and knowledge to keep your body core near 99° F, even in hypothermia weather.

- Your body loses heat several ways:
  - **Cold Temperature: radiation** (like you feel heat radiating from a hot stove) and conduction (like when you sit down on a cold rock).
  - **Windchill: convection**, as the air your body warms is blown away.
  - **Wetchill**: you lose heat when you are wet. By conduction into and through the cold water in your clothes, and by evaporation. (Like when you rub alcohol or spray Pain-Eeze on your arm and it cools by evaporating).

More next month.