

Health warning issued ahead of Arctic blast

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SPRING TWP, Pa., - Some of the coldest air this season is heading our way. The Arctic blast is expected to arrive Thursday and health professionals are issuing a warning ahead of the dangerous cold.

"Frostbite is actually when it gets so cold that you actually have ischemia -- or loss of blood flow -- and damage and cellular death to a body part," said Brendan Hudson, a physician's assistant with Patient First in Spring Township.

Hudson adds areas especially at risk for frostbite are distal parts including the nose, ears, toes, and fingers.

Signs of frostbite include skin that appears grayish, waxy, or hard.

"Frostbite can happen pretty quickly depending on how cold it is outside but what really makes things accelerate is the wind as well. So, even something that is uncovered for about 20 minutes, half an hour can develop frostbite," Hudson told 69 News.

Frostbite is serious, health professionals say warming the skin slowly is key.

"Return to inside to a nice warm area, try and slowly heat the area back up to about room temperature," Hudson explained.

In the bitter cold, checking on elderly neighbors and family members is also important. They are vulnerable to frostbite.

The cold isn't just dangerous for people, it's also bad for pets. The Animal Rescue League of Berks County is enacting a "Code Blue" for the Reading area beginning at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday -- meaning pets must be brought inside.