



Cold hands & feet

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Fingers or toes turn pale white or blue, then red, in response to cold temperatures.
- Pain when the fingers or toes turn white.
- Tingling or numbness in the hands or feet.

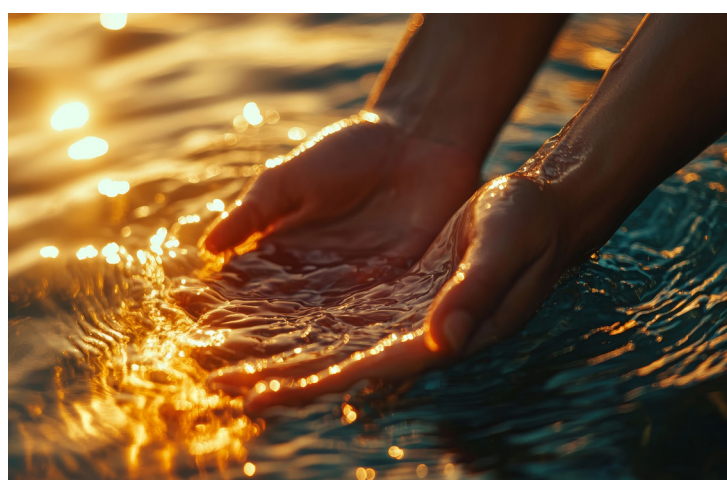
CAUSES

- Often the cause is unknown and not serious. Cold hands and feet can be a symptom of these conditions:
- Poor circulation. This is often due to a buildup of fatty plaque in your arteries, which can restrict blood flow to your hands and feet.
 - Raynaud’s disease. This is a disorder that affects the flow of blood to the fingers and sometimes to the toes.
 - Hypothyroidism, which makes your metabolism slow down and can cause you to feel cold, even in a warm place.
 - Any underlying disease that affects the blood flow in the tiny blood vessels of the skin. Women who smoke may be more prone to this.
 - Frostbite
 - Stress and anxiety
 - A side effect of taking certain medicines



TREATMENT

Emergency care is needed for frostbite. If a medical condition causes cold hands and/or feet, treatment for the condition is needed.



SELF-CARE / PREVENTION

- Avoid tobacco products. If you use them, try to quit.
- Avoid or limit alcohol and caffeine.
- Don’t handle cold objects with bare hands. Use ice tongs to pick up ice cubes, etc.
- Set your indoor thermostat at 65°F or higher.
- Wear mittens and warm socks to keep hands and feet warm.
- Avoid wearing tight-fitting footwear.
- Wiggle your toes. It may help keep them warm by increasing blood flow.
- Stretch your fingers straight out. Swing your arms in large circles like a baseball pitcher warming up for a game. This may increase blood flow to the fingers. Skip this tip if you have bursitis or back problems.
- Manage stress and anxiety.

TRIAGE QUESTIONS



After exposure to cold temperatures, do you have signs and symptoms of frostbite?

NO

YES ➡ GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE



With cold hands and/or feet, do you have weakness in the arms, hands, or feet?

NO

YES ➡ SEE DOCTOR



When exposed to the cold or when you are under stress, do your hands or feet turn pale, then blue, then red, and get painful and numb?

NO

YES ➡ SEE DOCTOR



USE SELF-CARE