

COLD WEATHER SLEEP IN THE ARCTIC ENVIRONMENT



WRAIR
Walter Reed Army Institute of Research
Defense Health • Global Health

COLD WEATHER SLEEP GEAR BY TEMPERATURE

above 30°		Patrol sleeping bag, Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System (ECWCS) Level 1 or 2, socks, hat
30° to -10°		Intermediate cold weather sleeping bag, ECWCS Level 1 or 2, socks, hat
below -10°		Patrol sleeping bag and intermediate cold weather sleeping bag, ECWCS Level 1 or 2, socks, hat
-30°		Patrol sleeping bag, intermediate cold weather sleeping bag, and bivy cover, ECWCS Level 1 or 2, socks, hat
below -30°		Patrol sleeping bag, intermediate cold weather sleeping bag, and bivy cover, ECWCS Level 1 or 2, ECWCS Level 3 fleece or Level 5 softshell jacket, socks, hat (Don't overdress, no sweating)

OTHER FACTORS THAT CAN IMPACT ARCTIC SLEEP

HIGH LATITUDE SLEEP

How to sleep if it is light outside:



Cover eyes for sleep (use an eye mask, patrol cap, balaclava)



No electronics 1 hour before sleep



Try to wake up at the same time each morning



Supplement: Take 3-5mg of Melatonin 1 hour before sleep

How to be alert if it is dark outside:



Get bright light within 1 hour of waking up



Light can be from lanterns, phones, whatever is available



Get your body moving/exercise



Supplement: Take 600IU or more of Vitamin D daily*

*Talk to your doctor about the right Vitamin D dosage for you

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GEAR USE FOR SLEEPING IN THE COLD

DOs

Put a tarp or poncho on the ground before sleeping pad and bag, use a bivy cover over sleeping bag if there is rain or snow

Shake the bag out and fluff it up **before use**

DON'Ts

Don't "cold bag" – remove snow towards ground level or pack snow down so you have a comfortable shelf

Don't sleep directly on the ground, **USE YOUR SLEEPING PAD**

WHAT TO DO WITH GEAR WHEN NOT SLEEPING:

Remove any frost that accumulates overnight

Shake the bag out and fluff it up **after use**

Open wide or turn sleeping bag inside out so that the sun and wind can dry it before stowing your bag

Always carry your sleeping bag in the waterproof carrying bag

TTP FOR CLOTHING:

Wear dry clothing made of wool or synthetics; Avoid cotton clothing

Wear loose-fitting clothing in layers – thin inner, insulating middle, waterproof outer

Place your feet in your Arctic mittens or inside Level 3 or Level 7 ECWCS

If space available, place dry boots and clothes inside of sleeping bag

HOW TO STAY WARMER LONGER WHILE SLEEPING



Consume lots of calories throughout the day



Eat warm meals and drink warm sugary fluids throughout day



An easy to digest or warm snack before getting into your sleeping bag can help you stay warmer longer while you sleep



Warm your body up before sleep with a few exercises but don't break a sweat



Limit fluid intake after evening meal



If able to heat water, fill a closable container (e.g., Nalgene bottle) with warmed water and place into sleeping bag



Go to the bathroom before getting into sleeping bag



If possible, do not get out of your sleeping bag after going to bed

References:

Northern Warfare Training Center Materials
Training Circular 21-3 "Soldier's Handbook for Individual Operations and Survival in Cold-Weather Areas"; Headquarters, Department of the Army, March 1986

