

COLD WAVE

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Context: The National Programme on Climate Change and Human Health (NPCCHH), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, has issued an advisory following a dip in night temperatures across Telangana and other states.

What is a Cold Wave?

- **Definition:** A cold wave is a significant temperature drop below the normal climatological value for a region.
 - **Criteria (as per IMD):**
 - **Plains:**
 - Minimum temperature is **10°C or less**.
 - Negative departure from normal is **4.5°C to 6.4°C** (Cold Wave).
 - Departure of **more than 6.4°C** is considered a **Severe Cold Wave**.
 - **Hilly Regions:**
 - Minimum temperature is **0°C or less**.
 - **Coastal Areas:**
 - Minimum temperature is **15°C or less**, with a negative departure of **4.5°C or more**.
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Season and Affected Regions

- **Cold Wave Season:** Extends from **November to March**, with peak events in **December and January**.
 - **Core Cold Wave Zone (States and UTs):**
 - Telangana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, and Odisha.
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Who is Most Vulnerable?

Certain population groups are at higher risk due to prolonged cold exposure:

- **Homeless individuals**
- **Elderly population**

- Economically disadvantaged groups
 - Pregnant and lactating women
 - Children
 - Outdoor workers and farmers
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Health Risks from Cold Waves

- **Severe Health Issues:**
 - **Hypothermia:** A dangerous drop in body temperature.
 - **Frostbite:** Freezing of skin and underlying tissues.
 - **Non-Freezing Cold Injuries:**
 - **Immersion Foot:** Caused by prolonged exposure to cold, wet conditions.
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Precautionary measures are crucial, especially for vulnerable groups, to prevent these cold-related health risks.



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