

Paediatric Drowning and Hypothermia

Key Points

GCS <15 - Transfer immediately to MTC unless in cardiac arrest

On Scene - early CPR and intubate apnoeic child Correct hypoxia, acidosis and hypothermia PEEP via cuffed tube

Core Temp <32C use active warming measures
Use extracorporeal warming in severe hypothermia
Consider associated other injuries, intoxication and seizures

Children are more likely to die of drowning than adults.

In ED, remove wet clothing, apply external warming, start resuscitation with warmed intravenous fluids and inhaled gases.

If ventilation required, use a cuffed tube where possible as vomiting and aspiration are common. Deliver PEEP starting at 5cm H2O to manage hypoxia and pulmonary oedema.

Extracorporeal warming is the most effective means of rapid restoration of core temperature in severe hypothermia.

If patient is in VF with core temperature below 30 deg C, deliver only 1 defibrillation. If there is no response continue CPR and warming until core temperature is above 30 deg C before defibrillating again.

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RELATED INFORMATION	