

# Basic First Aid Procedures

First aid is the immediate and temporary care given to the victim of an accident or sudden illness until medical services can be obtained. Keep these points in mind when handling situations that may require you to administer first aid:

- Remove everyone from danger and then provide first aid in a safe location. Also, do not attempt to make a rescue until you are sure you won't become a victim.
- Remain calm. Keeping your composure while helping the injured person will help him/her to keep calm and cooperate. If the person becomes anxious or excited, the damage from the injury could be increased.
- Plan quickly what you need to do. Learn basic procedures or have your first aid information available so you can care for the injured person.
- Send for professional help as soon as possible. The local emergency telephone number is \_\_\_\_\_. The school telephone number is: \_\_\_\_\_
- Let the person know that help is on the way and try to make them as comfortable as possible.

## Evaluating the Situation and Setting Priorities

To effectively deal with emergencies, the situation must be evaluated and priorities set.

Three evaluations which must be made to establish priorities for treatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Condition of the scene</li><li>• Type of injury</li><li>• Need for treatment</li></ul>	Primary first aid procedures are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Restore breathing.</li><li>• Control bleeding.</li><li>• Prevent shock</li></ul>
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Whenever possible, do not move the victim. Treat the person where you find him/her. However, several types of situations require the person to be moved out of immediate danger, such as fire, electrocution, and drowning.

## Bleeding

Bleeding needs immediate attention. Evaluate the type of bleeding and the amount of blood lost:

• Capillary oozing.	Injuries to capillaries or small veins. It is indicated by steady oozing of dark colored blood.
• Venous bleeding	Bleeding from the vein. It is indicated by a flow of dark-colored blood at a steady rate.
• Arterial bleeding.	Bleeding from an artery. It is indicated by bright red blood flowing quickly in spurts.

Blood flowing in a small, steady stream or small spurts can be serious, but can be controlled. Blood flowing in a heavy stream or large spurts is very serious and must be brought under control immediately.

The primary step to control bleeding is to exert direct pressure over the wound. Place the cleanest material available against the bleeding point and apply pressure by hand until the wound clots and can be dressed with bandages. If necessary, apply direct, even pressure with your bare hand. If blood soaks through the bandage, do not remove it. Apply more bandages and secure them. Make sure the bandages are not too tight so circulation is not restricted.

Look for swelling around the wound. If the bandage interferes with the circulation of the blood, loosen it. Elevate the wound above the level of the heart, except when there is a broken bone.

### Artery Pressure Point

If direct pressure on the wound does not control bleeding, direct pressure on any artery pressure point closest to the wound is necessary. The artery pressure point must be located between the heart and the wound.

## **Tourniquet Warning**

A tourniquet should only be used for hemorrhaging that cannot be controlled by direct or arterial pressure. Tourniquets are dangerous to apply, to leave on, and to remove. Stoppage of blood supply below the tourniquet can lead to gangrene and loss of limb.

## **Shock**

Shock occurs when the vital body functions are depressed. The three most common causes of shock are:

- Excessive bleeding
- Inadequate breathing
- Unsplintered fractures

If shock is not treated promptly, death may result, even if the injury causing the shock is not severe enough to cause death. It is NOT recommended that drivers attempt to splint a fractured bone; instead simply treat the victim for shock.

### **Recognizing shock**

When a person is in shock, the skin is pale, cold, clammy, and moist with beads of sweat around the lips and forehead. The pulse is fast, weak, or entirely absent. Breathing is shallow and irregular and the eyes are dull and vacant with dilated pupils. The person complains of nausea and dizziness. She may be unaware of the seriousness of the injury and then suddenly collapse.

### **Control of shock**

The victim should lie down on top of an article of clothing, newspaper or other material and kept warm with a light blanket. In warmer temperatures, it is not necessary to use a cover.

The person should not become overly warm so that perspiration occurs. Perspiration draws blood to the skin, away from the interior of the body where it is needed. In order to help the flow of blood to the heart and head, elevate their legs at least 12 inches high. If there is a head or chest injury or breathing seems difficult, elevate the chest instead of the legs.

Offer small amounts of water to the person every 15 minutes. Do not give water if the victim is vomiting, nauseous, or unconscious.

## **Burns**

It is not recommended to treat burns. First aid treatment often causes complications and interferes with the treatment given by the physicians. Keep the burned area uncontaminated and treat for shock.

Do not apply burn preparation and do not use ice water. It intensifies the shock. There are exceptions when it may be necessary to give first aid. Chemicals may continue to burn the skin if they are not removed. Large amounts of water should be used to flush the area free of the chemicals, particularly if it is a chemical burn of the eyes or face.

## **Be Prepared--Learn Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)**

CPR should be used when a person is unresponsive or when breathing or heart beat stops.

1. Call 911 immediately or ask someone else to do so.
2. Try to get the person to respond; if he doesn't, roll the person on his or her back.
3. Start chest compressions. Place the heel of your hand on the center of the victim's chest. Put your other hand on top of the first with your fingers interlaced.
4. Press down so you compress the chest at least 2 inches in adults and children and 1.5 inches in infants. One hundred times a minute or even a little faster is optimal. (That's about the same rhythm as the beat of the Bee Gee's song "Stayin' Alive.")
5. If you're been trained in CPR, you can now open the airway with a head tilt and chin lift.
6. Pinch closed the nose of the victim. Take a normal breath, cover the victim's mouth with yours to create an airtight seal, and then give two, one-second breaths as you watch for the chest to rise.
7. Continue compressions and breaths -- 30 compressions, two breaths -- until help arrives.

## **Epilepsy**

Once an epileptic seizure begins, you may not be able to move the person. Try to prevent him/her from injury, such as striking his head or body against any hard, sharp, or hot object.

Do not restrain the person or interfere with his movements. Epilepsy victims seldom bite their tongues during seizures. More harm is done when an object is forced between the teeth or into the mouth. Breaking teeth,

cutting lips, mouth, or tongue, can occur more often than by the tongue being bitten because of the seizure. You should communicate information about any seizure to the parents and to the school authorities.

## **Choking**

The Heimlich Method, or Hug of Life, is a procedure to help a choking person. Stand behind the person, place your arms around his/her waist and grasp your hands together halfway between the navel and sternum (right below the rib cage). Form a fist with the thumb side against the midriff area. Grasp your fist with your other hand, press midriff area with a quick upward thrust. If the person has collapsed, turn him on his back. Straddle him and press into the same spot with a quick upward thrust with the heel of one hand placed on top of the other hand. Continue until object is freed and/or the person begins coughing.

Do not pound or slap a choking person on the back. This can force the object further into the throat. Artificial respiration or offering water is useless because the throat is blocked. Children often choke from running with food or other objects in their mouths.