

## FIRST AID

**Warning: this advice is general guideline for use in an emergency. It is not intended to replace professional classes in First Aid and Resuscitation.**

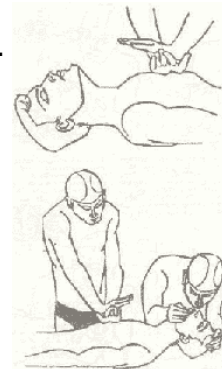
### Why learn First Aid?

First Aid is an important skill. By performing simple procedures and following certain guidelines, it may be possible to save lives by giving basic treatment until professional medical help arrive. Remember, too, that practice makes perfect. In an emergency there is no time to read instructions. If you've memorised some of the basic procedures, it will help you react quickly and efficiently.

### Breathing difficulties

If someone stops breathing, see if person replies if talked to or touched on the shoulder. If not, call the doctor and then begin First Aid.

- ✓ Place the person on his or her back on the floor.
- ✓ Tilt the head so that the chin is pointing upwards. Do this by placing the fingertips under the jawbone, then lift gently while pressing down softly on the person's forehead. This is done to make sure the tongue is not blocking the throat. Keep holding the head in this way while checking for breathing: see if the chest is rising and falling, or place your ear next to their mouth to listen for breathing.
- ✓ If there is breathing, hold the head as described above until help arrives.
- ✓ If not, start Artificial Respiration.



### How to give Artificial Respiration

- ✓ Tilt the head back and lift up the chin.
- ✓ Pinch the nostrils shut with 2 fingers to prevent leakage of air.
- ✓ Take a deep breath and seal your own mouth over the person's mouth.
- ✓ Breathe slowly into the person's mouth, it should take about 2 seconds to adequately inflate the chest. Do this twice.
- ✓ Check to see if the chest rises as you breathe into the patient's mouth. If it does, enough air is being blown in.
- ✓ If there is resistance, try to hold the head back further and lift the chin again.
- ✓ Repeat this procedure until help arrives or person starts breathing again.



If an adult is unconscious and has no pulse

If an adult is unconscious, see if there is breathing. If not start Artificial Respiration as described above. If there is no pulse, or if you are unsure, then proceed without delay as follows.

1. Look at the person's chest and find "upside down V" shaped notch that is made by the lower edge of the ribcage. Place your middle finger in this notch and then place your index finger beside it, resting on the breastbone.
2. Take the heel of your other hand and slide it down the breastbone until it touching this index finger. The heel of your hand should now be positioned on the middle of the lower half of the breastbone.
3. Now place the heel of your other hand on the top of the first. Keep your fingers off the chest, by locking them together. Your pressure should be applied through the heels of the hands only.
4. Keep your elbows straight, and bring your body weight over your hands to make it easier to press down.
5. Press down firmly and quickly to achieve a downwards movement of 4-5 cm. then relax and repeat the compression.
6. Do this 15 times, then give Artificial Respiration twice. Continue this 15 to 2 procedure until help arrives.
7. Aim for a rate of compression of about 100 per minute. You can help your timing and counting by saying out loud " one and two and three and four..." etc.

If a baby is unconscious and has no pulse

- ✓ Find a place between the nipples where the ribs meet in the breastbone.
- ✓ Move your fingers about 2 cm to the right from this point, just above their heart.
- ✓ Press firmly, but not forcefully, with your index and middle fingers.
- ✓ If you can't see the baby's chest rise, the pressure is not correct. But with babies, it is especially important to prevent further injury by taking care not to press too hard.

### Bleeding

With all types of bleeding, it's important to stop the flow of blood as quickly as possible.

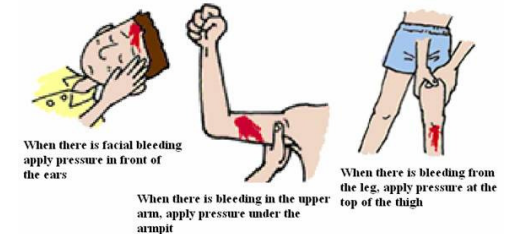
### Small cuts.

Small cuts in the veins stop the bleeding and clot within a few minutes. The area should then be washed, and a plaster placed gently on the top.

### Deeper cuts.

Deeper cuts in the veins produce dark blood that seeps out slowly and steadily. It can be stopped by gentle pressure on the wound with a sterile or clean cloth, followed by the application of a clean or sterile bandage.

Often these wounds need sewing or glueing, and therefore medical treatment will be necessary after first aid.



### Arterial bleeding.

Bleeding from an artery can cause death within a few minutes, so urgent first aid is essential. This type of bleeding pulsates and squirts blood as the pulse beats. The blood is often a light red colour.

To stop bleeding from an artery:

- apply hard pressure on the wound and keep this up until the patient receives the medical treatment.
- press with a sterile cloth or just use your hand if nothing else is available.
- put a bandage on the wound if possible. If the blood soaks through the bandages, press harder until the bleeding stops.
- do not remove the soaked bandages, but place another on top if necessary.
- do not attempt to clean the wound.

The person must be made to lie down, preferably with their head lower than the rest of their body. This will ensure that enough oxygen gets to the brain. If possible, position the wounded area higher than the rest of their body so that the pressure, and therefore the bleeding, will be reduced.

### Nosebleeds.

Nosebleeds occur when one of the small blood vessels in the mucous membranes of the nose bursts. Do not bend the head backwards or lie down, because this increases blood pressure in the head and so increases the bleeding. Blood may also run into the stomach.

To limit the bleeding:

- ✓ pinch the nostrils shut with the index and middle fingers for 10 minutes. This way, the vein is pressed together, which is often enough to stem the flow
- ✓ while the nostrils are shut, the person must breathe through their mouth.
- ✓ if the bleeding continues, it is important to contact a doctor.



If the person frequently suffers sudden, intense nosebleeds, they should also consult a doctor.

## Choking

Choking happens when the passage through the windpipe is blocked. This usually occurs when food that has not been thoroughly chewed gets stuck.

If someone looks like they are choking, ask them if they are able to talk. A person who is genuinely choking can usually only communicate with hand movements, and may place their hand against their throat.

In such a case they will definitely need help, so summon assistance for them.

Provided the person is conscious and breathing, you should not interfere.

However, be prepared to do so if the obstruction appears to become complete or markedly worse.

The best way to relieve choking is by using the Heimlich Manoeuvre.

### The Heimlich Manoeuvre.

1. Stand behind the person who is choking.
2. Place your arms around their waist and bend them well forward.
3. Clench your fist and place it right above the person's navel (belly button).
4. Place your other hand on top, then thrust both hands backwards into the stomach with a hard, upward movement.
5. Repeat this until the object stuck in the throat is expelled through their mouth.



If you need to carry out this manoeuvre on yourself, place a clenched hand above your navel and your other hand on the top. Then thrust your fist hard into your stomach. Repeat this until the object stuck in the throat is expelled through the mouth.

## Shock and fainting

Shock and fainting occur when only a small amount of blood circulates to the brain. This means that the brain is not receiving enough oxygen, which leads to a feeling of faintness, disorientation and dizziness.

Shock may also occur:

- after an accident involving loss of blood.
- after a serious infection with loss of fluids.
- after a serious burn.
- after other accidents that cause loss of fluids or blood.

When the flow of blood in the body is too slow, the blood pressure drops and too little oxygen is circulated through the body.

### When this occurs a person will:

- go pale.
- turn sweaty, clammy and cold.
- become dizzy.
- have a weak, fast pulse.
- have low blood pressure.
- have slow, weak breathing.
- lose consciousness.
- become anxious or restless.

- Place the victim in shock position
- Keep the person warm and comfortable
- Turn the victim's head to one side if neck injury is not suspected



ADAM

### What to do if someone is in shock or fainting

1. The person must lie on their back, preferably with their feet raised, to ensure enough blood gets to the brain.
2. Make sure the person is warm, comfortable and covered by a blanket if possible.
3. Do not give them anything to drink because they could run a risk of choking.
4. If the person vomits or bleeds from the mouth, he or she must be placed on their side to prevent choking.
5. Call for an ambulance. A person in shock must always be treated by a doctor

