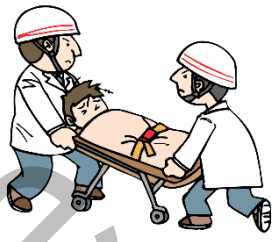
Room for notes

FIRST AID 1

First aid is the help that you give someone quickly after they have hurt themselves or have had an **accident**. It can stop a person from becoming more ill. In some cases, it can even save a person's life. Only someone who knows first aid well should try to **treat** an **injured** or sick person. Usually, you give first aid until a doctor or an **ambulance** arrives. Never try to give someone first aid **unless** you know what to do. The wrong actions can do more **harm** than good.



Call For Help

When someone has been hurt or has had an accident, the first thing to do is get help. If you don't know the phone number of the local doctor or hospital, **dial** an emergency number. Every country has special phone numbers for **ambulances**, **fire departments** and police.

When you call for help you should be able to give correct information. An ambulance needs to know where the **injured** person is **located** and what exactly has happened. In some cases, you will be given **instructions** on what to do until a doctor or an ambulance arrives.

Immediate Help

Sometimes you cannot wait until help arrives. You must begin helping a person at once, **especially** if the victim is **bleeding** strongly, has been **poisoned** or if breathing has stopped. Even if you wait for a short time this can be **fatal**. Here are some important **rules** for **immediate** help.

- Do not move a person who may have a broken **bone**, **internal injuries** or an injured **spine** unless you really have to.
- If the **victim** is lying down, keep the person in that position. Do not allow them to walk or stand up.
- Never give food or **liquid** to a person who may need an operation.
- If the victim is unconscious, turn the head to one side to keep them from **choking**. But do not move the head of a person who may have a **spinal injury**.
- Never give water to someone who is **unconscious**.
- Make sure that the victim has an open **airway**. The nose, mouth and **throat** should be clear in order for them to **breathe**.
- Make the victim comfortable but **touch** a person only if you have to.
- If **necessary**, move an injured person away from the sun or put them into the **shade**.
- **Remain calm** and talk to the injured person. Explain what is being done and say that help is on its way.

Shock Treatment

If the blood in your body does not **circulate properly** it may result in shock. Any **serious** injury or illness may also lead to shock. When a person is in shock blood does not carry enough **oxygen** and food to the **brain** and other organs.

A **victim** who suffers from shock may look afraid, **confused**, weak and extremely **thirsty**. The skin **appears pale** and feels cold. Pulse and breathing are fast.

To **treat** shock, **place** the victim on their back and **raise** their legs a little. Warm them with **blankets**.

Defibrillator used to start a normal heartbeat if the heart stops beating
Image: Yury Masloboev / Yury Petrovich Masloboev), CC BY-SA 3.0 via Wikimedia Commons

Bleeding

Strong **bleeding** can **cause** death in minutes. Bleeding from small **wounds** usually stops after a short time because the blood **clots**. But clotting cannot stop the **flow** of blood when a wound is big.

The best way to stop bleeding is to **press** on the wound itself. If possible, let the person lie down and **raise** the bleeding part of the body. Then put a **sterile handkerchief**, **cloth** or **towel** on the wound and press it down with your hand. Do this for 10 to 20 minutes until help arrives.

Sometimes direct pressure cannot stop strong bleeding. If a leg or an arm is hurt, you can try to stop bleeding by putting **pressure** on the **artery** that carries blood to the injured body part.

Put pressure on your arm to stop bleeding
Image: Mike6271, CC BY-SA 4.0 , via Wikimedia Commons

Poisoning

There are four ways in which a person may be **poisoned**. Poison can be **swallowed**, **inhaled**, **injected**, or **absorbed** through the skin. If a poison **victim** becomes **unconscious** or has **difficulty** breathing call for an **ambulance immediately**.

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A person who has swallowed something poisonous may die within minutes if they are not **treated**. The first step is to find out what kind of poison someone has swallowed. Call a doctor or a **poison control center** immediately and follow the **instructions** that you are given carefully.

If a person has inhaled a poison like **carbon monoxide** or **chlorine gas** move them to fresh air at once. Open all doors and windows.

Injected poisons are those that come from **insect stings** or bites. If you are stung by a bee the **stinger remains** in the wound. **Remove** it carefully and put ice on the sting or **run** cold water over it. If a person is bitten by a **tick** pull out the remaining part carefully and slowly. Use a **glove** or something else but not your **bare** hands. Do not try to burn it off or put oil on it. If a **rash** or **flu-like symptoms develop** in the following weeks contact a doctor.

Sometimes a victim may have an allergy towards bites or **stings**. In such a **case** either call a doctor, an ambulance or take the person to the nearest hospital.

Poisons can also be **absorbed** through the skin if you get in contact with poisonous plants or **chemical substances**. If this happens, **remove** all the clothes that someone is wearing and **flush** the skin with water for about 10 minutes.

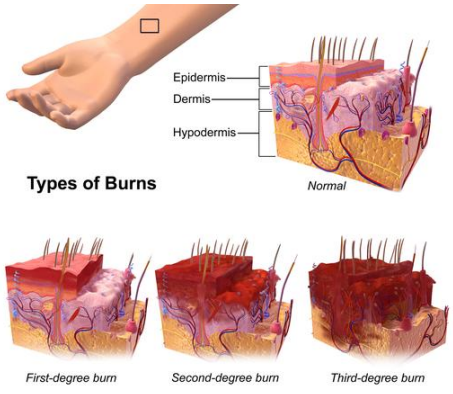
Artificial Respiration

Begin with **artificial respiration** as soon as possible if a person has stopped breathing. Two or three minutes without **breathing** can cause **brain damage** and six minutes can be **fatal**. The most **efficient** way is **mouth-to mouth resuscitation**. Put the victim on their back. Kneel down, press the nose together and **place** your mouth over the mouth of the **victim**. Take a deep breath and blow hard enough to make the **chest rise**. Then remove your mouth and listen for the air to come out. **Repeat** the **procedure** until the victim starts breathing again or help has arrived.

Burns

The first aid **treatment** of burns **depends on** how **severe** the burns are. First degree burns show a **reddening** of the skin. Second degree burns **damage** deeper **skin layers** and third-degree burns **destroy tissue** of deeper skin layers. To treat a first- and second-degree burn put ice on it or **run** cold water over it. Then put on **sterile bandages**. A person who has third degree burns should not be treated at home.

When you treat burns never open **blisters** and do not put oil or other **greasy substances** on the burn.



Types of burns

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Frostbite

Frostbite **occurs** when a person has been in extremely cold weather for a long time. It mostly **affects** the skin of the ears, fingers, nose or toes. Frostbitten skin **appears pale** or grayish blue and feels **numb**. It should be treated **gently**. Warm the **affected** area with the heat of your hand or cover it with clothes until you can get the victim indoors. **Thaw** the skin by putting it in **lukewarm** water. Never use water that is hotter than 40°C. If you get **blisters** do not open them.

First Aid Kits

It is a good idea to have a **kit** with first aid **supplies** at home or in your car when you travel. It should include **bandages**, tissue, something to write on, a **flashlight**, **scissors**, **safety pins**, a spray or a **lotion** that kills **germs**. Always have a **blanket** ready to cover a person.

Contents of a first-aid kit

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