

SUN CITY PALM DESERT



Emergency Preparedness Committee

AT HOME FIRST AID



Introduction

- This was created to help YOU help someone you care about if they get injured.
- It is meant as a guide for you, while you wait for EMT's or Paramedics to arrive.
- In some cases, we tell you what to do, and in others, what not to do.
- If, at any point, you do not think you are capable of handling the situation, CALL 9-1-1 immediately!

DO NO FURTHER HARM, wait for the professionals.

Three things to remember:

1. STAY CALM!

2. Evaluate the scene to ensure your own safety.
 - Make sure there is nothing that can cause you harm, such as water on the floor or downed electrical wires.

3. Engage others who may be nearby to:

- Call 9-1-1!
- Have someone at the door to let the First Responders in and direct them to you.



Introduction

One rule you need to follow:

**Ask the person if they want you to help them.
If they say NO, all you can do is call 9-1-1.**

GOOD SAMARITAN LAW:

- The Good Samaritan Law protects each of us who is not a professional medical service provider from possible legal ramifications of helping a victim.
- You can only do what you have been trained to do. Do not try to do more.
- We are not doctors, nurses, EMTs or paramedics, but we can still help in an emergency if we have training.
- Ask the victim for their consent to have you treat them.
- This is what we can do for our spouses, partners, significant others, and friends.



Introduction

This document will cover first aid for:

- Burns
- Eye Injuries
- Falls, Head, Neck, Spinal Injuries
- Fractures, Sprains, Strains
- Heat Related Conditions
- Hyperventilation
- Scorpion and Fire Ant Stings
- Snake Bites
- Severe Bleeding
- Shock
- Stroke
- Heart Attack, Cardiac Arrest
- Choking



Burns

Signs and Symptoms:

- ♦ 1st Degree – superficial burns
 - Dry, red painful
- ♦ 2nd Degree – partial thickness burns
 - Blisters, intensely red, shiny, wet, painful to touch, may be white or splotchy, severe swelling
- ♦ 3rd Degree – full thickness burns – usually painless
 - May appear dry & white or charred & black
 - May involve fat, muscles, nerves
 - May cover more than one body part
 - Burns affecting eyes, head, neck, hands, feet or genitals
 - Age of victim is younger than 5 or older than 60
 - Are the result of chemicals, explosions or electricity
 - May have caused possible burns to the airway

First Aid Actions – First Degree Burns:

1. Cool by flushing with **cool (NOT COLD)** water, immersing burned area into a bowl of cool water, or apply cool compress for 5 to 10 minutes, then remove. This reduces pain and swelling.
2. Remove jewelry around affected area in case of swelling.
3. DO NOT use ice.
4. DO NOT apply butter or ointment to burn, as oils prevent healing.



Burns

5. Apply Aloe Vera or antibiotic cream to reduce drying and speed up repair of damaged skin.
6. Cover loosely with sterile gauze bandage.
7. Elevate burned area above the heart as often as possible.
8. Consult a doctor if burn shows signs of infection or gets worse.

These burns do not usually require further medical treatment unless they affect more than 20 % of the body.

First Aid Actions – Second Degree Burns:

1. Leave blisters intact – **Do NOT break blisters**, as it will increase the risk of infection.
2. Increase fluid intake.
3. Remove jewelry around affected area in case of swelling.
4. Treat as first degree burns, as long as the burn is less than 3 inches and is not in a sensitive area such as: face, groin, hands or feet.
5. Burns larger than 3 inches or on the face, groin, hands or feet need professional attention.
6. Let burn dry, then loosely apply a sterile non-stick pad and bandage.
7. Follow up with your Primary Care Doctor.
8. These burns take 1 to 3 weeks to heal.



Burns

First Aid Actions – Third Degree Burns:

1. **Call 9-1-1 immediately!**
2. These burns require immediate professional medical attention.
3. **Do NOT** try to treat these burns at home.
4. Move the victim away from the burning location if it is safe for you to do so.
5. **Do NOT** remove any burned clothing.
6. Elevate burned area above the heart if possible
7. Treat for shock until EMTs or Paramedics arrive.
8. 3rd Degree burn victims may also be affected by smoke inhalation or carbon monoxide poisoning.

First Aid Actions – Chemical Burns:

Chemical burns are caused by exposure to strong acids or bases such as drain and toilet bowl cleaners, metal cleaners and battery acid.

1. **Call 9-1-1 immediately!**
2. Using gloves or a piece of cloth, brush off powdered chemicals from the victim's skin.
3. Remove any of the victim's clothing with the chemicals on it.
4. **Do NOT contaminate yourself in the process.**
5. Act as quickly as possible to flood the affected area with cool clean water for at least 20 minutes or until medical help arrives.



Burns

6. If the chemical got into the victim's eyes, have them lie down while flushing the eyes with water.
7. Cover the burns loosely with sterile dressings or gauze.

First Aid Actions – Sunburn:

The best way to treat sunburn is to prevent it!

Here in CA use of SPF 50 or higher Sunblock is recommended.

1. Treat sunburn as you would 1st or 2nd degree burns as appropriate.
2. Move to the shade.
3. Wear a brimmed hat, pants and long-sleeved shirt.
4. Apply sunscreen liberally at least a half hour before sun exposure.

Reapply every two hours, especially if you are sweating or just came out of the water.



Eye Injury - Basic

Signs and Symptoms:

Injury to the eye from sand, dust, other objects or burns, causes:

- Pain
- Blurring vision
- Excess tearing

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating – DO NO FURTHER HARM

1. Remove particles or chemicals by flushing the eye with water for 15 to 20 minutes.
2. This is a two-person task; one with clean gloved hands to gently hold the eyelids open, the second to gently pour sterile or clean water from the nose side of the affected eye outward.
3. Rest the eye to minimize the lid moving over the cornea using eye patches on both eyes.

As with all injuries, infection is a concern. Evaluation by a medical professional is recommended.



Eye Injury – Impaled Object

Signs and Symptoms:

Impaled object in the eye or trauma to the eye

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating – DO NO FURTHER HARM

1. Evaluate ABC'S (Airway, Breathing, Circulation) and control any bleeding.
2. Consider possible neck or head injury.
3. **Do NOT remove an impaled object.**
4. Call 9-1-1 and have the victim evaluated by a doctor.
5. Use an ice pack to minimize swelling.
6. If possible, keep person in a sitting position



Falls, Head, Neck, Spinal Injuries - FALLS

♦ FALLS:

DO NOT MOVE SOMEONE WHO HAS FALLEN!

Signs and Symptoms:

You saw someone fall, or the patient or another person who was there tells you they fell:

- Resist the impulse to move the fallen person.
- Do not attempt to help them get up right away.
- Moving someone who has fallen may make the situation worse.
- First assess the person's physical status, letting the results determine next steps.
- When in doubt, **CALL 9-1-1!**



Falls, Head, Neck, Spinal Injuries – Conscious Victim

First Aid Actions: DETERMINING STATUS OF A CONSCIOUS VICTIM

Obtain patient's consent before treating - DO NO FURTHER HARM

If there is any chance that the victim hit their head, CALL 9-1-1!

1. Assess the victim's status – breathing, bleeding, mental state.
2. Try to ascertain how the accident happened.
3. Perform pain assessment and physical inspection for obvious bleeding, deformity of upper and lower extremities.
4. Apply basic first aid as appropriate.
5. If there is a possible injury to neck or spine; stabilize the victim's head and neck against movement.
Instruct victim to remain as still as possible.
6. Stay with victim until medical help arrives.



Falls, Head, Neck, Spinal Injuries – Unconscious Victim

First Aid Actions: **DETERMINING STATUS OF AN UNCONSCIOUS VICTIM**

1. Try to determine what caused the loss of consciousness.
2. Check to see if the victim is wearing a medical alert tag.
3. Perform initial assessment looking for ABC's (Airway, Breathing, Circulation), obvious bleeding, deformity of upper and lower extremities.
4. If you have not already done so, **CALL 9-1-1**.
5. Does the victim respond to verbal and tactile cues?
6. If there is a possible injury to neck or spine; stabilize the victim's head, neck and spine against movement.
7. Instruct victim to remain as still as possible.
8. Stay with victim until medical help arrives.



Falls, Head, Neck, Spinal Injuries – Spinal Injury

♦ Spinal Injuries:

Signs and Symptoms:

These symptoms may occur with the injury **or develop a day or two later:**

- Ongoing change in level or loss of consciousness, confusion, drowsy, difficult to arouse
- Severe pain or victim will not move their head, neck, back, or stiff neck
- The person complains of weakness of arms or legs, numbness or paralysis, or lacks control of his or her limbs, bladder or bowel, or be unable to move
- Severe cut, bruise or deformity on scalp, head or facial bleeding; severe headache
- Slurred speech
- The neck or back is twisted or positioned oddly
- Breathing may stop

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating - DO NO FURTHER HARM
Call 9-1-1 if you suspect head, neck or back (spinal) trauma!

Any blow to the head can cause a head injury from minor to life threatening.

Do Not Move The Victim!



Falls, Head, Neck, Spinal Injuries – Spinal Injury

It is important to check the patient frequently!

1. If unconscious: keep the airway open and check breathing.
2. Keep the person still – place rolled towels on both sides of the head and neck to prevent movement. Minimize movement of head, neck or spine.
3. If the head is sharply turned to one side, do NOT move it!
4. Look for signs of bleeding, apply direct pressure with sterile gauze.
5. If there is swelling, apply an ice pack for 20 minutes every hour.
6. Watch for changes in breathing and alertness.
7. Keep the person from getting chilled or overheated.
8. **Do not attempt this unless it is absolutely necessary!**

If you absolutely must roll the person because he or she is vomiting, choking on blood, or is in danger of further injury, use at least three people as follows:

- Working together – keep the person's head, neck and back aligned while rolling the person onto one side. If possible, wait for medical supervision.
9. Gently hold the head in line with the body in the position in which you found it.



Open Fractures

♦ Open (Compound) Fracture:

Signs and Symptoms:

- Broken ends of bone protruding from the skin

First Aid Action: Obtain patient's consent before treating

1. First Priority – stop the bleeding!
2. Call 9-1-1!
3. Cover wound with sterile /clean dressing.
4. Secure dressing in place to prevent further loss of blood.
5. Immobilize injured part.
6. Joints should be immobilized above and below the fracture.
7. Splints can be used and held in place with cloth ties or tape.
8. If victim complains of numbness or tingling, loosen the bandage.



Closed Fracture, Sprains & Strains

♦ **Closed Fracture:**

In most cases, the average person cannot tell from the outside if the injury is a break or a sprain or strain. Therefore, we treat these the same until medical help arrives.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Obvious deformities, discoloration, pain. No open wound.
- May be a laceration over or near the fracture site.

First Aid Action: Obtain patient's consent before treating

1. Immobilize the injured part where a fracture is suspected.
2. Joints should be immobilized above and below the fracture.
3. Splints can be used and held in place with cloth ties or tape.
4. If victim complains of numbness or tingling, loosen the bandage.
5. Contact 9-1-1 unless victim can sit in a car to the Emergency Room or doctor.



Closed Fracture, Sprains & Strains

Questions that may help to diagnose:

- Did you hear a bone snap?
- Do you feel pain when you press on the skin over the suspected fracture?
- Are you unable to move the injured limb?

If the answer is yes to these questions, it is likely a fracture.

♦ **Sprains & Strains:**

Signs and Symptoms:

- Injury to a joint ligament. Fibers are stretched or partially torn.
- Often involves injuries to blood vessels and surrounding soft tissue
- Swelling, tenderness, pain upon motion

First Aid Action: Obtain victim's consent before treating

R - Rest the Injured part

I - Ice the area (remove jewelry before swelling occurs)

C - Compress with elastic wrap or bandage

E - Elevate the part if possible

Seek medical attention if pain persists or is severe.



Heat Related Conditions

Signs and Symptoms:

♦ Dehydration

- Mild - Fatigue, increased thirst, dry lips, dark yellow urine
- Moderate to Severe – Severe thirst, dry mouth with little saliva, dry skin, weak, dizzy, confused, nausea, fainting, muscle cramps, loss of appetite

♦ Heat Cramps

- Painful muscle cramping, usually in the legs and abdomen, from dehydration

♦ Heat Exhaustion

- Skin can be cool, moist, pale, ashen or flushed, severe lack of energy
- Headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, exhaustion, sweating, rapid pulse

♦ Heat Stroke

- Includes symptoms of Heat Exhaustion and skin which is hot, sweaty, red, or dry
- Rapid, weak pulse, shallow breathing, vomiting, or seizures
- Change in consciousness, person may be confused or disoriented



Heat Related Conditions

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating

♦ **Dehydration**

1. Drink one to two quarts of water or sports drinks over two to four hours.

♦ **Heat Exhaustion**

1. Move victim to shade or a cooler environment and let them rest.
2. Loosen any tight clothing; remove perspiration-soaked clothing.
3. Cool patient's entire body by applying cool, wet towels to skin.
4. If conscious, give SMALL amounts of water or sports Drink.

Too much water, too fast, may cause vomiting!

♦ **Heat Stroke**

1. **Call 9-1-1!**
2. In addition to the above, apply ice packs to the neck, armpits, wrists, ankles and groins, using thin barriers between ice and skin.
3. Fanning may help, as may raising the victim's legs.
4. Try to keep patient calm until help arrives.



Hyperventilation

During emotional stress, fast, deep breathing is common.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Victim will look anxious and be struggling for breath
- Speech will be difficult
- Dizziness or Lightheadedness
- Palpitations
- Feeling of choking or suffocation
- Sweating
- Trembling or marked tingling/Numbness in the hands
- Cramps in hands and feet
- Victim may be fearful of dying during an attack

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating

1. **DO NOT have the victim breathe into a paper bag**
2. Find shelter in a quiet place
3. Reassure the person to help relax their breathing.
4. Encourage the victim to breathe slowly. Have the victim breathe in through the nose; hold the full inhalation for several seconds; then exhale slowly through the mouth.
5. Exhales should be slow and without force.
6. Repeat the steps until the victim is breathing normally.



Scorpion & Fire Ant Stings

♦ Scorpion Stings

Signs and Symptoms:

- Severe, sharp pain
- Swelling and discoloration

First Aid Actions:

Call 9-1-1 - Obtain patient's consent - DO NO FURTHER HARM

1. Cool wound area with ice pack, cold compress or cold water
2. Seek medical attention

♦ Fire Ant Stings

Signs and Symptoms:

- Extremely painful
- Tiny blisters
- **Immediately call 9-1-1 if signs of anaphylactic shock appear.** This can be life threatening.

Signs of Anaphylaxis include:

- Itchy
- Hives
- Trouble breathing
- Throat starting to close



Scorpion & Fire Ant Stings

Fire ants swarm when disturbed, and will attack cooperatively and aggressively. They grab hold of the victim's skin and sting repeatedly. Some people are highly allergic.

First Aid Actions: Call 9-1-1 - Obtain patient's consent – DO NO FURTHER HARM

1. Be careful not to break the tiny blisters.
2. Wash with antiseptic or soap and water.
3. Cover with a sterile bandage.
4. For relief, try a paste made of baking soda and water, and take a mild, non-aspirin pain reliever.



Snake Bites

Do not make any cuts or suck on the bite!

Signs and Symptoms:

- Sharp, burning pain
- Area around bite may become discolored and swell
- It may take an hour or more for signs to appear

First Aid Actions: Call 9-1-1 - Obtain patient's consent – DO NO FURTHER HARM

- 1. Get medical care as soon as possible to neutralize venom.**
2. Keep victim calm
3. Remove rings or other jewelry around the area of the bite.
4. Put a broad constricting band around the bitten limb 2 to 4 inches above the bite, between the heart and the bite.
5. THIS IS NOT A TOURNIQUET! The band should be snug, but loose enough that you can put a finger under it easily.
6. DO NOT DO THIS FOR A BITE ON A FINGER, TOE, THE HEAD OR TRUNK!
7. Periodically check the pulse on both sides of the band.
8. Immobilize a bitten extremity with a splint and/or sling.
9. Keep the bite wound **lower** than the victim's heart.
10. Do not apply ice.



Snake Bites

SNAKE BITES Requiring Medical Help

If the victim must wait for medical attention to arrive, do the following **in addition** to the above:

11. Have the victim lie down and remain still.
12. Position the bitten part lower than the rest of the body.
13. If not done already, immobilize the limb with a splint.
14. Treat for shock, continuing to keep the bite lower than the heart.



Severe Bleeding

Control bleeding and prevent infection!

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating

- 1. Call 9-1-1!**
2. Wear disposable gloves and protective goggles or glasses
3. Do NOT remove any large penetrating objects.
4. Gently irrigate wound with water if possible
5. Using a sterile gauze pad, apply firm pressure to the wound using the palm of your hand
6. Secure the pad tightly over the wound with an elastic bandage or rolled gauze.
7. Do not remove the blood-soaked bandage
8. Apply additional dressings and bandage if blood soaks through
9. Maintain pressure until bleeding stops
10. Check for feeling, warmth and color above and below the injury
11. If bandage is too tight, loosen immediately
12. Keep the person from getting chilled or overheated
13. Have the person rest comfortably
14. Monitor ABCs (Airway, Breathing, Circulation)
15. Levitate injured part unless it causes more pain



Severe Bleeding – Embedded Object

First Aid Actions: Call 9-1-1 - Embedded Object

1. **Do not remove** the embedded object
2. Place a dressing around the object to stabilize it and keep it from moving.

For your protection, wash your hands immediately after giving care.

Leave Wound Packing and Tourniquet to the professionals unless you have STOP THE BLEED training!



Shock

Shock is a condition in which the circulatory system fails to deliver oxygen-rich blood to the body's tissues and vital organs.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Skin: pale, ashen, cool, moist
- Restlessness, agitated or confused behavior
- Nausea and vomiting, excessive thirst
- Fatigue and muscle weakness
- Trembling or shivering, weak, dizzy, faint, chilled
- Altered level of consciousness
- Rapid breathing and pulse

First Aid Actions: Obtain patient's consent before treating

1. **Call 9-1-1!**
2. Monitor ABCs (Airway, Breathing and Circulation)
3. Control bleeding
4. Keep patient from getting chilled or overheated
5. Elevate legs 8 to 12 inches unless you suspect a head, neck or back injury or fractured hips or legs
6. Comfort and reassure the patient

Monitor for any changes in Airway, Breathing or Circulation.



Heart Attack & Cardiac Arrest

Heart Attack and Cardiac Arrest are different things!

♦ Heart Attack

Heart Attacks are caused by arterial blockage of the heart, which causes the heart muscle not to get enough oxygen. The people experiencing these symptoms are generally conscious.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Tightness or heaviness in chest
- Numbness in arm or jaw
- Sweating
- Feeling lousy
- Indigestion

Signs may be different for women:

- Pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center or left side of the chest, jaw, neck back or stomach
- Shortness of breath, with or without chest discomfort
- Vomiting, Sweating, lightheadedness, dizziness, unusual fatigue, heartburn, sudden feeling of anxiety
- A lot of coughing or wheezing

First Aid Actions:

1. Call 9-1-1!

2. If available, have Automated External Defibrillator (AED) standing by.



Heart Attack & Cardiac Arrest

♦ Cardiac Arrest

Cardiac Arrest is the sudden loss of all heart activity, due to an irregular heart rhythm. Breathing stops. The person becomes unconscious. It is an electrical problem, which may result from near drowning, shock, dehydration, heart attack, carbon monoxide poisoning, or drug overdose. Without immediate treatment, sudden cardiac arrest can lead to death.

Signs and Symptoms:

- Sudden collapse
- No pulse
- No breathing
- Loss of consciousness

Signs and Symptoms which may occur before sudden cardiac arrest:

- Chest discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Weakness
- Fast-beating, fluttering or pounding heart (called palpitations)

Sudden cardiac arrest may occur without warning.

First Aid Actions:

1. Call 9-1-1!

**2. Begin Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
and, if available, use AED!**



Stroke

A stroke is when the blood flow to the brain is diminished or stopped.

- Caused by blockage or bleeding in the brain
- Time is of the utmost importance

Signs and Symptoms:

Remember **BE FAST!**

B – Balance – Is the person steady on their feet?

E – Eyes – Is vision blurred, see double or total loss

F – Face – Drooping on one side? Can victim smile?

A – Arms – Weakness in one arm?
Can they raise arms over head?
Does arm droop due to weakness?

S – Speech – Is it Slurred?
Are they unable to speak? Hard to understand?

T – TIME TO GET HELP!

Other Symptoms:

- Numbness in face, arms or legs
- Confusion or trouble speaking or understanding
- Severe headache

First Aid Actions:

1. Determine the answers to the questions listed above as quickly as possible.
2. Based on the answers, contact 9-1-1 and communicate the answers to the questions.



Choking

Choking happens when an object lodges in the throat or windpipe, blocking air flow. It can be life-threatening if not treated immediately.

Signs and Symptoms:

- One or both hands clutching the throat
- A look of panic, shock or confusion
- Inability to speak
- Strained or noisy breathing
- Squeaking sounds when trying to breathe
- Cough which may either be weak or forceful
- Skin, lips, or nails that turn blue or gray
- Loss of consciousness

If a person cannot talk, cough, cry or laugh, give first aid.

First Aid Actions:

1. Give five back blows – place arm across chest while standing just behind and to the side of the victim. Bend the person over at the waist and administer the five blows between the shoulder blades, using the heel of your hand.
2. If this doesn't dislodge the object, give five abdominal thrusts (Heimlich Maneuver).
3. Alternate between five blows and five thrusts until the blockage is dislodged.
4. If this doesn't work after the first set, call 9-1-1 then return to continue blows and thrusts.



Choking

To Give Abdominal Thrusts:

1. Stand behind the person. For a child, kneel down behind them. Place one foot between the legs of the victim. Place the second foot slightly behind the other for balance. Wrap your arms around the victim's waist and tip the victim slightly forward.
2. Make a fist with one hand. Put it just above the victim's navel.
3. Grasp the fist with the other hand. Press into the stomach/abdomen, with quick, upward thrusts, as if you are trying to lift the victim up slightly. For a child, use gentle yet firm pressure so internal organs are not damaged. With a pregnant woman, use the fist just above the baby bump at the base of the breastbone, where the lowest ribs join (like where you would do CPR).
4. Give five abdominal thrusts and see if the blockage has been removed. If not, repeat.

If the victim becomes unconscious:

5. Using your leg between the victim's legs for balance, lower the person to the floor, on their back, with arms at their sides.
6. Call 9-1-1 if you haven't already!
7. Begin CPR.
8. Look in mouth and remove any foreign object, if visible, before giving breaths.

IF YOU ARE ALONE, USE THE BACK OF A CHAIR OR CAR DOOR.