

First Aid Basics:

In emergency situations, prompt, properly-administered first aid can mean the difference between life and death, rapid versus prolonged recovery, or temporary versus permanent disability. Safety comes first, but when accidents do happen, it is important to have someone who knows how to handle the situation effectively. You may be that person. In that case, knowing what to do, and not to is important. If you aren't qualified, quickly get someone who is. Also, know where the first aid kits and emergency eyewash stations are before an incident occurs. And, understand and follow the universal precautions when dealing with blood.

The following table lays out some basic first aid information:

- * **Call for help** - If you are not alone, have someone go for help immediately. If you are alone, immediate care is a priority. However, that immediate care may be going for help.
- * **Analyze the situation** - Don't become a victim yourself. If you can be safe while doing it, get the victim away from any danger source such as water, fire, or downed power lines. Be sure to turn off all power sources before touching an electrocuted victim. If there is any chance of spine or neck injury do not move the victim unless he or she is in a life threatening situation.
- * **Don't move the victim** - If there is any chance of spine or neck injury do not move the victim unless he or she is in a life threatening situation.
- * **Look for signs of life** - Look for signs of life and give artificial respiration or CPR if necessary but only if you have been trained. Be sure help is on the way before starting CPR. Do not tilt the victims head back if you suspect a neck injury.
- * **Control heavy bleeding** - Stop the flow of blood by direct pressure, elevating the injury above the heart or pressure points. Do not use a tourniquet unless the person is in danger of bleeding to death and you've been trained to apply one.
- * **Treat for shock** - Signs of shock include cold, pale skin; a rapid, faint pulse; nausea; rapid breathing; and weakness. To treat for shock, keep the victim lying down; cover him/her only enough to maintain body heat; don't move the victim unless absolutely necessary; and get medical help immediately.
- * **Treat for choking** - A person can choke to death in a few minutes. You can tell if a person is choking if he/she can't speak, cough, or breathe. If the person is choking, use the Heimlich Maneuver.
- * **Treat for burns** - For small burns, gently soak burn in cold water or pour cold water on burn. Do not treat large burns with water unless they are chemical burns. Cover burn with a dry, sterile bandage. Provide artificial respiration as needed. Seek medical attention. Some chemicals should not be flushed with water, but neutralized by other means-see chemical label.
- * **Treat for chemical burn in eye** - Quickly flush the eyes with lots of water for at least 15 minutes (for best results, do so at an eyewash station, emergency shower, or hose). Try to force the eyes open to wash chemical out. Do not bandage eyes. Seek medical attention.
- * **Treat for Fracture** - Do not move the victim unless you absolutely have to. This is especially important if you suspect a neck or back injury. Get medical help.