



Pharmaceutical
Society of Australia



First Aid in the Home

(This information does not replace a first aid course)

First aid is one of the most important skills anyone can learn. It may save a life or prevent permanent injury. This card gives some first aid advice for a few common events. To learn more about first aid, enrol in a first aid course with a registered training organisation.

DRABCD Action Plan

St John Ambulance recommends using their DRABCD Action Plan in assessing whether an injured person has any life-threatening conditions and if immediate first aid is needed.

D – check for Danger

- To you, others and the injured person.

R – check Response

- Is the injured person conscious or unconscious?

A – check Airway

- Is airway clear of objects?
- Is airway open?

B – check for Breathing

- Is chest rising and falling?
- Can you hear or feel air from mouth or nose?
- If no breathing, give 2 initial breaths.

C – give CPR

- If no signs of life – unconscious, not breathing and not moving, start CPR.
- CPR involves giving 30 compressions on lower half of breastbone, at a rate of approximately 100 compressions per minute, followed by 2 breaths.

D – apply a Defibrillator (if available)

Follow voice prompts.

Important

If a person is unconscious, or needs emergency medical care, phone **000** for an ambulance and follow **DRABCD**. If on a mobile phone outside the network coverage area, dial 112.

Attend a first aid course run by a Registered Training Organisation, such as St John Ambulance or the Australian Red Cross.

Minor cuts and grazes

- Clean the wound thoroughly with clean (preferably sterile) water or saline solution.
- Apply a sterile dressing; put pressure on the wound to stop bleeding and elevate the area.
- A pharmacist can advise on dressings.

Seek medical help if:

- A cut is longer than 1cm – it may need stitches
- The wound is very dirty
- There is something imbedded in the wound
- There is severe bleeding.

Head injury

- Monitor person's breathing and pulse.
- Support person's head and neck during movement in case spine is injured.
- Place a sterile dressing over wound to control bleeding – apply direct pressure to wound **unless** you suspect a skull fracture.
- Lie person down with head and shoulders slightly raised. If person vomits, turn them onto side and clear airway.
- Phone 000 for an ambulance.

Seek medical help urgently if person:

- Vomits
- Is drowsy, less alert or unconscious
- Develops unusual behaviour
- Develops a headache
- Has blood or fluid leaking from their ears
- Has blurred vision or pupils that are unequal in size.

Burns and scalds

- Remove person from danger.
- Cool burnt area with cold running water for at least 20 minutes.
- Remove clothing and jewellery from burnt area, unless stuck to burn.
- Place sterile, non-stick dressing over burn – a pharmacist can advise on dressings.

DO NOT

- Apply fat, lotion or ointment to burns.
- Use towels, cotton wool or blankets directly on a burn.
- Remove anything stuck to a burn.
- Touch burnt areas or burst any blisters.

Seek medical aid if:

- The burn involves the airway
- The burn involves hands, face, feet or genitals
- The burn is deep, even if the casualty does not feel any pain
- You are unsure of the severity of the burn
- A superficial burn is larger than a 20 cent piece.

Choking

Adult/Child over 1 year

- Encourage person to relax, breathe deeply and cough to remove object.
- If unsuccessful – phone 000 for an ambulance.
- Bend person well forward and give up to 5 sharp back blows (with heel of hand) between their shoulder blades. Check if obstruction has been relieved after each blow.
- If blockage has not cleared after 5 back blows – place one hand in the middle of the person's back for support, place the heel of the other hand in the CPR position on the chest and give 5 chest thrusts – slower but sharper than CPR compressions. Check if obstruction has been relieved after each chest thrust.
- If blockage has not cleared after 5 chest thrusts – continue alternating 5 back blows with 5 chest thrusts until medical aid arrives.
- If person becomes unconscious, remove any visible obstruction and commence CPR.

Infant under 1 year

- Phone 000 for an ambulance.
- Place infant on your forearm, with head downwards and support head and shoulders on your hand.
- Hold infant's mouth open with your fingers and give up to 5 sharp back blows between shoulders with heel of your hand. Check if obstruction has been relieved after each back blow.
- If blockage has not cleared after 5 back blows – place infant on back on a firm surface, place two of your fingers on lower half of breastbone (in CPR position) and give 5 chest thrusts – slower but sharper than CPR compressions. Check if obstruction has been relieved after each chest thrust.

- If blockage has not cleared after 5 chest thrusts – continue alternating 5 back blows with 5 chest thrusts until medical aid arrives.
- If infant becomes unconscious, commence CPR.

Poisoning

- Follow DRABCD.
- Phone 000 for an ambulance (and a fire brigade if atmosphere is contaminated with gas or smoke).
- Listen to the casualty – provide reassurance but not advice.
- Try to determine the type, amount and time of poisoning.
- Phone the Poisons Information Centre on 13 11 26.

DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING.

Basic first aid kit

- Sterile cotton gauze swabs to clean wounds.
- Assorted sterile adhesive dressing strips.
- Assorted non-stick wound/island dressings.
- Stretch roller bandage.
- Crepe bandage.
- Triangular bandage.
- Safety pins or clips.
- Rust resistant scissors.
- Rust resistant tweezers.
- Sterile normal saline solution.
- Antiseptic.
- Isopropyl alcohol swabs.
- Sting neutraliser.
- Cold or ice pack.
- Disposable gloves.

For more information

St. John Ambulance Australia – website www.stjohn.org.au

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflets – your pharmacist can advise on availability.

NPS Medicines Line – phone 1300 888 763 Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm EST.

The Poisons Information Centre on 131 126 from anywhere in Australia.

Pharmacists are medicines experts. Ask a pharmacist for advice when choosing a medicine.

© St John Ambulance Australia 2007. St John First Aid Protocols are for the Australian market only. The information contained within this card was correct at time of printing. All care has been taken in preparing the information but St John takes no responsibility for its use by other parties or individuals. The information is not a substitute for first aid training. For more information on St John first aid training and kits visit www.stjohn.org.au or call **1300 360 455**.

Sponsored by



Your **Self Care** Pharmacist