

## **Basic First Aid Fast Facts**

### **Basic First Aid Procedures**

Following are some basic first aid procedures for treating [shock](#), [bleeding and wounds](#), [eye injury](#), [fainting](#), [heat stroke](#), and [unconsciousness](#). These techniques can be used in the workplace or at home and being prepared will help make the most of a serious situation.

### **Shock**

Shock can be life threatening. Symptoms include cold sweat, weakness, irregular breathing, chills, pale or bluish lips and fingernails, rapid weak pulse and nausea.

1. Call 9-1-1 or seek medical help immediately.
2. Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink.
3. Lay the victim on his/her back, but do not move him/her if there's a back or neck injury. If the victim is unconscious, vomiting or has severe injury to the lower face or jaw, lay him/her on his/her side and be sure the victim is getting adequate air.
4. Keep the victim warm (not hot) by use of [blankets](#) or clothes.
5. Raise the victim's feet and legs with a pillow. (Only do this if it does not cause the victim any pain.)

### **Bleeding and Wounds**

1. Place a clean cloth or [gauze](#) and gloved hand over the wound; apply firm, steady pressure for at least 5 minutes.
2. Call 9-1-1 or other emergency personnel if bleeding is severe.
3. Elevate an injured arm or leg above the level of the victim's heart if practical.
4. When bleeding stops, secure the cloth with a bandage. **Do Not** lift the cloth from the wound to check if bleeding has stopped. Be sure the bandage is not too tight—it may cut off circulation.
5. Check the victim for shock.

*\*Never use a tourniquet unless you cannot control the bleeding. Tourniquets may result in subsequent medical amputation.*

### **Eye Injury**

#### 1. Chemical

1. Hold the eyelids apart and flush the eyeball with lukewarm water for at least 15-30 minutes. Be careful not to let runoff water flow into the other eye.
2. Place a [gauze pad](#) or cloth over both eyes and secure it with a bandage.
3. Get to an eye specialist or emergency room immediately.

#### 2. Cut, Scratch or Embedded Object

1. Place a gauze pad or cloth over both eyes and secure it with a bandage.
2. Do not try to remove an embedded object.
3. Get to an eye specialist or emergency room immediately.

### **Fainting**

*Note:* Fainting victims regain consciousness almost immediately. If this does not happen, the victim could be in serious danger and you should call 9-1-1 as soon as possible.

1. Lay the victim down on their back and make sure they have plenty of fresh air.
2. Reassure the victim and apply a [cold compress](#) to the forehead.
3. If the victim vomits, roll the victim on his/her side and keep the windpipe clear.
4. Report the fainting incident to the victim's doctor.

### **Heat Stroke**

Heat stroke can be life threatening. Symptoms can include a body temperature of 105°F or higher; dry, hot, flushed skin; rapid pulse; unconsciousness; and lack of perspiration.

1. Get the victim out of the heat and into a cooler place.
2. Place the victim in the shock position, lying on the back with feet up.
3. Remove or loosen the victim's clothing.
4. Cool the victim by fanning and applying cloth-wrapped cold packs or wet towels.
5. Treat for shock.

## **Unconsciousness**

1. Determine responsiveness by gently tapping the victim's shoulder and asking, "Are you okay?"
2. If there is no response, shout "Help!" and look for a medical alert tag on the victim's neck or wrist.
3. If victim is not breathing and has no pulse, begin CPR.
4. Call 9-1-1 or seek medical aid as soon as possible.

## **Commonly Asked Questions**

### ***When should I call for assistance?***

If the victim is unconscious, call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number. If the victim is conscious, call an ambulance—unless they ask that an ambulance not be called. Call 9-1-1 or an ambulance anyway IF the victim:

- Is or becomes unconscious
- Has trouble breathing or is breathing in a strange way
- Has chest pain or pressure
- Is bleeding severely
- Has pressure or pain in the abdomen that does not go away
- Is vomiting or passing blood
- Has seizures, a severe headache or slurred speech
- Appears to have been poisoned
- Has injuries to the head, back or neck
- Has possible broken bones

## **Sources**

[American Heart Association](#)

[American Red Cross](#)

[National Safety Council](#)