

FIRST AID

BASIC FIRST AID HINTS

These hints will enable you to be of assistance to an injured person in an emergency. Everyone should be trained to give skilled first aid and these notes cannot replace such training. First aid courses are offered in most centres in New Zealand. Classes are held regularly throughout the year at various locations.

First aid kits are available for home, road, work place or recreational emergencies.

BITES AND STINGS

BEES:-

- * Brush the sting away: do **NOT** pull it out.
- * Raise the affected area and apply a cold compress.
- * If known to suffer from allergic reactions, seek urgent medical attention.

BURNS AND SCALDS

- * Immerse or flush the injured part with cold liquid for at least 10 mins.
- * Remove rings, watches, clothing, etc. *before* it starts to swell.
- * Dress the area with clean preferably non stick dry dressing.
- * If in doubt of the severity, seek medical attention.
- * Do **NOT** break blisters or pull away burnt clothing.
- * Do **NOT** USE ADHESIVE DRESSING.

ELECTRIC SHOCK

- * **DANGER - DISCONNECT POWER SOURCE**
- * Check responsiveness - look, listen and feel.
- * Check **Airways, Breathing and Circulation.**
- * If necessary, apply C.P.R. if trained how to do so.
- * If unconscious, turn the victim into the recovery position.

EPILEPTIC SEIZURE

- * Protect the casualty from any dangers, such as hard objects, busy roads, etc.
- * Do **NOT** forcibly restrain him.
- * Do **NOT** put anything in his mouth.

- * When convulsions cease, place the casualty in the recovery position to aid his breathing.
- * Observe the casualty and allow to rest until fully recovered.

FAINTING

- * Assist casualty to rest lying down and raise the legs.
- * Loosen any tight clothing at the neck, chest and waist, to assist circulation and breathing.
- * Ensure a supply of fresh air, allow to rest until fully recovered.

FOREIGN BODY.

In the wound:

- * Remove the object only if on the surface and can be easily removed with a swab, or rinsed off.
- * If imbedded do **NOT** attempt to remove it.
- * Elevate the affected area to control bleeding and apply direct pressure around the edges of the wound against foreign body.
- * Place a gauze over and/or around the object and apply dressing.
- * Seek urgent medical attention.

FISH HOOKS:

- * Cut the line from the hook.
- * Provided there is no danger of internal damage, push the hook through the skin until the barb protrudes, then cut the shaft between the barb and the skin.
- * Release the pressure after 10 he skin.
- * Gently withdraw the hook, clean the wound and cover with a dressing.
- * Seek medical attention to deal with possible infection.

GRAZES:

- * Clean with soap and water.
- * Cover with clean dressing.

NOSE BLEED:

- * Sit the casualty down with the head tilted well forward, and loosen clothing around neck and chest.
- * Pinch the soft part of the nose and forbid speech, swallowing, coughing, spitting or sniffing.
- * Release the pressure after minutes. If still bleeding, continue for a further 10 minutes.
- * If after 30 minutes bleeding persists, seek medical aid.

POISONING:

- * Obtain as much information on what has happened and symptoms as quickly as possible.
- * Place casualty in the recovery position and call Poisons Information Centre for specific advice.
- * Do **NOT** attempt to induce vomiting.
- * Call an ambulance. Send with the casualty any samples of vomit and containers, such as bottles or pill boxes found nearby.

SPRAINS AND BRUISES:

- * Rest the injured part in the most comfortable position.
- * Apply an ice pack for at least 20 minutes.
- * Compress the injured part with a thick layer of cotton wool and apply a firm bandage.
- * Elevate the injured limb.
- * If in doubt about the casualty's injury, arrange removal to hospital.

BLEEDING:

- * Cover the wound with a sterile dressing and apply direct pressure with thumb and/or fingers.
- * Lay the casualty down in a comfortable position and elevate the injured part as much as possible and support it.
- * Apply sufficient padding to extend well beyond the edges of the wound.
- * Press the padding down and secure with a firm bandage but not so tight as to cut off circulation.
- * Try to avoid contact with another persons blood by using a dressing or improvised barrier.

EMERGENCY FIRST AID SUMMARY

SAFETY

- * Assess the whole situation for safety.
- * Move the victim only if in immediate danger.

RESPONSE

- * Is the victim conscious or unconscious?
- * Check the victims response to speech and touch.
- * **IF THERE IS NO RESPONSE, turn the victim into the RECOVERY POSITION.**

AIRWAY

Clear and open the airway by:

- * Clearing the mouth of any foreign matter such as blood, vomit or food.
- * Tilting the head back and supporting the lower jaw.

BREATHING

* Is the victim breathing? (look, listen and feel). If not, begin mouth to mouth ventilation at once, if you have been trained to do so. Call for an ambulance as soon as possible but do not leave the victim unattended to do so.

CIRCULATION

- * Check the pulse at the neck (carotid pulse) by placing your finger tips gently in the hollow between the voice box and the adjoining muscle. Check for at least 10 - 15 second or up to a full minute for hypothermia or drowning.
- * If there is no pulse, chest compressions, if trained how to do so, should commence immediately.
- * Call for an ambulance as soon as possible but do not leave the victim to do so.

The combined process of applying mouth to mouth ventilation and chest compressions is called **CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION**.

CPR is a life saving technique and one that we should all be trained in applying.

