

# 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.

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

## 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.

### 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.

## For more information

### **St. John Ambulance Australia**

Website: [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au)

### **Healthdirect Australia**

Phone: 1800 022 222

Website: [www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au)

### **Consumer Medicine Information (CMI)**

Your pharmacist can advise on CMI leaflets.

### **National Prescribing Service (NPS) Medicines Information**

Phone: 1300 MEDICINE (1300 633 424)

Website: [www.nps.org.au](http://www.nps.org.au)

### **The Poisons Information Centre**

In case of poisoning phone 13 11 26 from anywhere in Australia.

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

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Your Self Care Pharmacy: