

FIRST AID AT WORK

Basic advice

This leaflet contains basic advice on first aid for use in case of an emergency.
It is not intended as a substitute for effective training.



What to do in an Emergency



Priorities:

- Assess the situation – do not put yourself in danger
- Make the area safe
- Assess all casualties and attend first to any unconscious casualties
- Send for help – do not delay.

Check for a response:

Gently shake the casualty's shoulders and ask a question. If there is no response your priorities are:

- Shout for help
- Open the airway
- Check for normal breathing
- Take appropriate action.



Airway

To open the airway place your hand on the forehead and gently tilt the head back.

Lift the chin with two fingers. Look, listen and feel for normal breathing for no more than 10 seconds.

Breathing:

- Look for chest movements
- Listen at the mouth for breath sounds
- Feel for air on your cheek.

If the casualty is breathing normally:

- Place in recovery position
- Get help
- Check for continued breathing.

If the casualty is NOT breathing normally:

- Get help
- Start chest compressions (see CPR).

Circulation (CPR)

- Lean over the casualty and with straight arms, press vertically down 5-6cm on the breastbone and then release the pressure. Repeat 30 times.
- Pinch the casualty's nose and place your mouth round the casualty's mouth and make a good seal.
- Blow into the mouth and repeat 2 breaths, watching the chest rise / fall with each breath.
- Start 30 compressions again without delay.
- Continue chest compressions and breaths at a ratio of 30:2 until help arrives.

Severe Bleeding

If there is severe bleeding:

- Apply direct pressure to the wound
- Raise and support the injured part (unless broken)
- Apply a dressing and bandage firmly in place

Broken Bones and Spinal Injuries



If a broken bone or spinal injury is suspected, obtain expert help.
Do not move casualties unless they are in immediate danger.

Burns

Burns can be serious so if doubt, seek medical help.

Cool the affected area with cold water until pain is relieved, this may take 10 minutes or more, but this must not delay taking the casualty to hospital

Certain chemicals may seriously irritate or damage the skin. Avoid contaminating yourself with the chemical. Flood the affected area with water for 20 minutes – continue treatment even on the way to hospital if necessary. Remove any contaminated clothing which is not stuck to the skin.

Eye Injuries

All eye injuries are potentially serious. If there is something in the eye, wash out the eye with clean water or sterile fluid from a sealed container to remove the loose material. **Do not attempt to remove anything that is embedded in the eye.**

If chemicals are involved, flush the eye with water or sterile fluid for at least 10 minutes, while gently holding the eyelids open. Ask the casualty to hold a pad over the injured eye and send them to hospital.

Record Keeping

You must record any incidents involving injuries or illness which you have attended

Source of Material:

[HSE 'Basic Advice on First Aid at Work'](#)