



ROYAL COLLEGE  
RED CROSS SOCIETY

# FIRST AID IN EMERGENCIES




HealthFirst





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# THE HEALTHFIRST MAGAZINE SERIES

The HealthFirst Magazine series is a set of publications which are published by the Royal College Red Cross Society as a free of charge publication. This Magazine series includes 5 magazines under the topics of First Aid in Emergencies, Importance of Mental Health, Laws related to children in Sri Lanka, Importance of Physical Health and Non Communicable Diseases.

This project is being concluded to provide good knowledge about non-identical health related topics as mentioned above for students, teachers and parents in Sri Lanka as the country is going through a global pandemic. The main intention of this magazine series is to generate a new link for the community to have a healthy life. Healthy living means maintaining a healthy lifestyle and introducing habits that improve your health. It might be difficult for you to change the usual habits at once but you can always take new steps to become more healthier. An important first step is identifying less healthy habits and learning new, positive ones to replace them. The HealthFirst Magazine which consists of 5 different magazines will create a new path to be healthy for not only the students alone but also for each and every individual in the country.

HealthFirst Magazine series consists of Health tips, Health-related articles from doctors, articles from the members of the Royal College Red Cross Society and many more important health-related information and facts which will be useful for all the readers. We cordially invite you to refer to these magazines.

**Nethul Tennakoon,  
Editor,  
HealthFirst Magazine.**

# First Aid in Emergencies

First aid is a lifesaving attempt to buy time until specific help arrives to provide proper treatment to an injury. It also helps to minimize injury and future disability. In serious cases. First aid is an emergency care given immediately to an injured person.

## 1. When there is a bleeding wound on the body following steps should be followed.

- Put pressure on the wound to stop the flow of blood
- Call for help
- Keep pressure on the wound until help arrives
- Elevate the part of the body with the wound above heart level
- Pressure the point- where main artery enters the wound
- Pressure dressing/wrap to a joint



## 2. When there is a serious allergic reactions due to Stings, food, drugs the following should be done.

- Look for the symptoms of allergy
  - Red blotchy rash/swelling
  - Slow/harsh breathing
  - Severe wheezing



- Make them comfortable
- Take to hospital



### 3. When a person is having a seizures / fits please follow these steps

- Protect the person from getting an injury due to fall or other trauma
- Do not restrain and keep him/her on the floor
- Do not put anything in their mouth including water
- Once the seizure is over,
- Check for breathing
- Help to rest on their side
- Seek medical help



### 4. When a person is having a severe ASTHMA (wheezing) attack please follow these steps.

- Reassure the patient
- Allow to sit the patient
- Help them take their medicine
- Seek medical help

## 5. When a person suffers a Head injury please follow these instructions.

- Get the patient to rest.
- Apply a cold pack to the injury.
- If the patient is drowsy, vomit or condition deteriorates, call a doctor.
- If unconscious don't keep the patient on vertical position (sitting) as he might aspirate.



## 6. When a person suffers a Spinal injury, please follow these steps.

- Suspect if casualty loses consciousness as a result of head injury
- Maintaining an airway takes a priority
- Turn to the side
- Maintain spinal alignment and minimize twisting
- Log roll:
  - Needs yourself and 2 bystanders
  - Gently roll casualty in unison into side recovery position





## Spine boarding:

- Cervical collar
- Log roll to side
- Slide spine board underneath
- Log roll back to board
- Strap chest, hips and legs
- Head blocks
- Strap across neck and forehead



**In simple injuries please follow this.**

**Abrasions (scratch marks):-**

- Clean with running water
- Tap with sterile gauze dressing
- Antibiotic cream to keep germs away
- Picture frame dressing

### **Nose bleeds:-**

- Pinch nose- apply direct pressure
- Lean forward
- Do not hold the head back- blood will run down throat into the airway and aspirate
- Application of ice pack

If you see a person in unconscious status it may be due to Shock.  
Please follow these steps.

**Causes of shock may be :-** Heart failure  
Allergic reactions  
Uncontrolled bleeding

**Signs of shock:-** Pale, moist skin  
Dizzy  
Difficult to rouse

### **What to do ?**

- Call for help
- Lay them on ground
- Elevate legs at least 12" to stabilize blood pressure
- Cover with blanket
- If loses consciousness- recovery position

**Col Dr Champika Abeysinghe**  
**Consultant Anaesthetist, Army Hospital Colombo.**



# Road accidents and prevention



You may have witnessed road traffic accidents or heard about them from the media. Road traffic accidents not only endanger the lives of the pedestrians and those travelling in vehicles, but cause great damage to property too. A careful study of the causes for road accidents makes it evident that most of such accidents happen due to negligence, ignorance or mistakes of all road users

## **Faults committed by the drivers**

- Not observing road rules
- Driving too fast
- Driving under the influence of alcohol
- Driving when tired
- Driving under stress
- Parking vehicles obstructing traffic
- Not wearing seat belts / safety helmets

## **Faults committed by pedestrians**

- Not following road signs
- Walking in the dark or wearing dark colored clothes when walking in the dark.
- Walking on the road in groups
- Walking on the left-hand side of the road
- Throwing waste matter onto the road

## **Technical faults of vehicles**

- Brake failure
- Defunct lamps (head lights or tail lights)
- Tires of poor condition

## **Poor road conditions**

- Lack of properly displayed road signs and traffic signals
- Dilapidated roads
- Open uncovered drains on the edge of the road
- Unsafely placed structures on roads (e.g. electricity / telephone poles, water supply systems, buildings, etc.)
- Lack of / defunct street lamps.

## **Remedial measures that can be taken to prevent road accidents**

- Raising awareness among motorists on the importance of driving etiquette and obeying road rules.
- Raising awareness among pedestrians on the importance of road etiquette and obeying road rules

- Pedestrians and drivers to refrain from taking alcohol and illicit drugs.
- Motorists to wear seat belts.
- Motorcyclists including children to wear safety helmets.
- Taking measures to prevent overloaded vehicles from running on roads.
- Avoid driving when drowsy or tired.
- Avoid driving under severe stress.
- Preventing passengers from travelling on the footboard of public vehicles.
- Preventing passengers from getting on or off, moving vehicles.
- Pedestrians to cross the road at pedestrian crossings and being alert when crossing the road at other places.
- Preventing pedestrians from crossing the road at places where a clear view of the road cannot be obtained (e.g. at bends).
- Preventing pedestrians from crossing the road in front of or behind stationary vehicles.
- Raising awareness among pedestrians on the importance of carrying a torch / being clad in light colored clothes or clothes made of material that can be seen in the dark when walking on roads at night.

- Preventing people from throwing waste matter on to roads e.g. banana skins.

**By: Sandesh Ramanayake – After O/L**

## Domestic injuries and prevention

Accidents are the main cause of injury and even death in children. People only relate accidents to traffic accident or accidents in outdoor activities. However, as a matter of fact, the place where people regard as the safest place—home—hides many “hazards”. The main cause of home accident is general negligence of safety at home. This pamphlet aims at providing some measures in preventing home accident, first aid measures and how to call for help.

### Fall

**Cause:** Unstable gait of the toddler, presence of objects on floor, lack of supervision, curiosity of the children, etc



### Prevention:

- Keep floors free of toys and obstructions.
- Exercise close supervision when toddler learns to walk.
- Never leave babies unattended on raised surfaces.



- Constantly check floor surface for wear and tear.
- Keep floor dry.
- Always ensure bed-rail of the baby cot is raised when the baby is in the cot.
- Always use a securely fitted safety harness in a pram, pushchair or highchair.
- Windows and doors must be locked to avoid misadventure by children.
- Avoid placing “step-stones” such as a chair next to a window.
- Take extra care to avoid side-turning of a baby chair.

### First Aid:

1. Don't panic. Call for help if necessary.
2. Check the level of consciousness of the infant/child.
3. Examine the child if airway is clear (e.g. can talk, cry or not); if breathing is adequate and circulation is normal (observe color of the face, depth and rate of breathing).
4. If breathing and circulation are normal, check for any other injuries on the body.
5. If bleeding occurs, ensure there is no foreign body in the wound. Apply direct pressure to stop bleeding by covering a clean gauze on it and add pressure on the gauze by your hand. Elevate the injured limb
6. If deformity is seen on the injured part, do not move it and call for help immediately.

## Choking

**Cause:** Accidental swallowing of foreign body, strangulation, covering of head by blankets, accidental suffocation by pillow while baby sleeps in a prone position, neardrowning etc.



### Prevention:

- Choose toys appropriate to the age of children. Avoid toys with detachable small parts.
- Ensure small objects are kept out of reach of children.
- Pull cords on curtains and blinds should be kept short and out of reach of children.
- Strings and plastic bags should be kept out of reach of children.
- Foldable furniture should be properly placed and locked. Instruct children not to play with them.
- Instruct children not to play while eating.

- Never let children use milk bottle by themselves without adult's supervision.
- Never use pillow for baby under one year of age. Do not use large and heavy blanket. Never let the blanket cover the face of children during sleep.
- Avoid sleeping with baby on the same bed.
- Never leave children alone in a bath tub or basin filled with water.
- Bucket filled with water must be covered and keep children away from it.

### First Aid:

1. Do not panic. Remove the cause from the patient.
2. Call for help immediately.
3. Perform CPR if necessary.

## Burn/Scald

**Cause:** Scald by hot water, burn by fire, touch on hot objects such as cooking utensils, etc.



### Prevention:

- For adults, never hold a hot drink/food and a child at the same time.
- Ensure milk, congee or other foodstuff is at a reasonable temperature before feeding.
- Ensure proper fence or door is installed at the entrance of kitchen. Such must be closed at all times. Instruct children not to go into kitchen.
- While cooking, pay extra attention to the stove fire and the cooking utensil. Turn the pan handle away from the front, and close to the wall.
- When running a bath for a child, always test water temperature beforehand.
- All hot objects including an iron or containers with hot matter must not be placed near the margin of a table. Avoid using tablecloth. Matches and lighters should be placed out of reach of children.
- Instruct children not to wander around when adults are preparing for a meal.
- Install proper cover to sockets.
- Warn children never play with fire.



### First Aid:

1. Do not panic. If necessary, call for help.
2. Examine whether the child if airway is clear (e.g. can talk, cry or not); if breathin is adequate and circulation is normal (observe color of the face, depth and rate of breathing).
3. If breathing and circulation are normal, check for burn or scald injuries on the body.
4. Hold the injury site with under running water for about 10 minutes. If the child feels chilled, stop rinsing.
5. Cover the injury site with a sterile gauze. Dress with bandages.
6. Never apply toothpaste, soy sauce or other ointments on the injured sites.
7. Do not puncture any blister.
8. Do not tear off any burned clothing that sticks on the injured site.

**By: Suvin Jayawardana – 12ME**

## Injuries caused by Animal attacks

In Sri Lanka most of the injuries that are reported due to animal attacks are results of snake bites, scratches or bites of animals like dogs, cats, and monkeys etc. Insect stings by bees and wasps, are commonly reported accidents. Most often, small children and those engaged in farming are victims of animal attacks. Animal bites and insect stings are harmful and cause great pain, infection, shock and sometimes even death.



### Precautionary measures that can be taken to prevent animal attacks

- Wearing safety boots.
- Using a stick when walking outdoors
- Carrying a torch when walking in the dark.
- Walking with heavy steps.
- Refraining from inserting hands and legs into likely habitats of snakes. e.g. anthills, tree trunks, logs, bushes and heaps of rubbish
- Refraining from touching a snake even if it appears dead.
- Keeping the home environment clean.
- Positioning ventilation holes high in the walls so that snakes cannot slide through them.
- Checking the pillows, mattresses and bed sheets before using them.

**By: Jayindu Muthukumarana – 12M3**

# Basic CPR techniques

If a person is not breathing, his heartbeat will stop. Do CPR (chest compressions and rescue breaths) to help circulation and get oxygen into the body.

First, open a person's airway to check if they are breathing (don't begin CPR if a patient is breathing normally). Then, get help. If you are not alone, send someone to call for help as soon as you have checked breathing. Ask the person to come back and confirm that the call has been made.

**Then follow these CPR steps:**



1. Position your hand (above). Make sure the patient is lying on his back on a firm surface. Kneel beside him and place the heel of your hand on the center of the chest



2. Interlock fingers (above). Keeping your arms straight, cover the first hand with the heel of your other hand and interlock the fingers of both hands together. Keep your fingers raised so they do not touch the patient's chest or rib cage.



3. Give chest compressions (above). Lean forward so that your shoulders are directly over the patient's chest and press down on the chest about two inches. Release the pressure, but not your hands, and let the chest come back up. Repeat to give 30 compressions at a rate of 100 compressions per minute.



4. Open the airway (above). Move to the patient's head. Tilt his head and lift his chin to open the airway again. Let his mouth fall open slightly



5. Give rescue breaths (above). Pinch the nostrils closed with the hand that was on the forehead and support the patient's chin with your other hand. Take a normal breath, keep your mouth on the patient's such that both your lips lock together and blow until you can see his chest rise.



6. Watch chest fall. Remove your mouth from the patient's and look along the chest, watching the chest fall. Repeat steps five and six once.



7. Repeat chest compressions and rescue breaths. Place your hands on the chest again and repeat the cycle of 30 chest compressions, followed by two rescue breaths. Continue the cycle.

**By: Senula Deelana – After O/L**



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