NATIONAL safety
COMPLIANCE

First Aid Safety

First Aid Safety

- Employees face hazards on a daily basis which could cause harm to them or fellow employees. Additionally, employees can be injured due to accidents and health related problems. Even when all possible precautions are taken to prevent workplace accidents and injuries, there is still the chance they could occur. Employees need to be prepared and know the steps to take when an accident or injury occurs. Knowing the correct procedures to follow could minimize the injury and even save a life.

First Aid Safety

First aid is limited care for an illness or injury. While not all injuries require higher levels of treatment, some injuries require immediate trained medical attention. Most first aid consists of simple steps and procedures which can be performed with minimum training. The goal of first aid can be summed up in three points known as The Three P's of First Aid:

- Preserve Life - This is always the focus of those who provide first aid. Keep your own safety in mind too. Never put yourself in danger.

First Aid

- Prevent Injury- Preventing the victim's injury from getting worse or additional injury from occurring is very important when administering first aid. Remove any hazards from the area. If it is not feasible to remove the hazards, move the victim to a safer place. Only move a victim if absolutely necessary.

- Promote Recovery- Quickly contacting trained medical professionals is important to the long-term recovery of a victim in many instances. The sooner a person is properly treated the less long-term effect the injuries will have.

    - Report every incident to your employer. The accident will then be investigated to help prevent it from happening again.

First Aid

Here are a few things all employees should know:

- The locations of all first aid kits;
- The location of the nearest eye wash and emergency shower; and
- Know who is CPR certified in your department.

Anytime a person is cut or wounded they risk getting tetanus, a painful and deadly bacterial infection. Getting a tetanus shot is a good idea as a preventive measure. Doctors recommend one every 10 years.

Bloodborne Pathogens

When dealing with any situation where blood might be present, it is important to protect yourself from bloodborne pathogens commonly referred to as BBP. Bloodborne pathogens are disease causing microorganisms present in human blood. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, Hepatitis B Virus, Hepatitis C Virus and HIV. If contact with or splatter from blood or other potentially infectious material is reasonably anticipated then personal protective equipment should be worn on the potentially exposed areas of your body. It is especially important to cover mucus membranes, skin abrasions or cuts, and your hands. Gloves, aprons, and mouth and eye protection are some basic forms of protection which should be used.

Cuts and Scrapes

Minor cuts and scrapes can usually be treated without a trip to the ER. It is important to treat them properly though to avoid infection. If the cut is from an animal or human bite you should seek professional medical attention. Here are the steps to take to treat minor cuts and scrapes:

- Stop the bleeding - Apply pressure to the area and if possible elevate the wound. If the cut is bleeding severely, blood spurts from the wound or the bleeding will not stop after applying pressure for 10 minutes, you should seek professional medical help. If the cut is deeper than ¼ of an inch or is gaping open, stitches will probably be necessary.

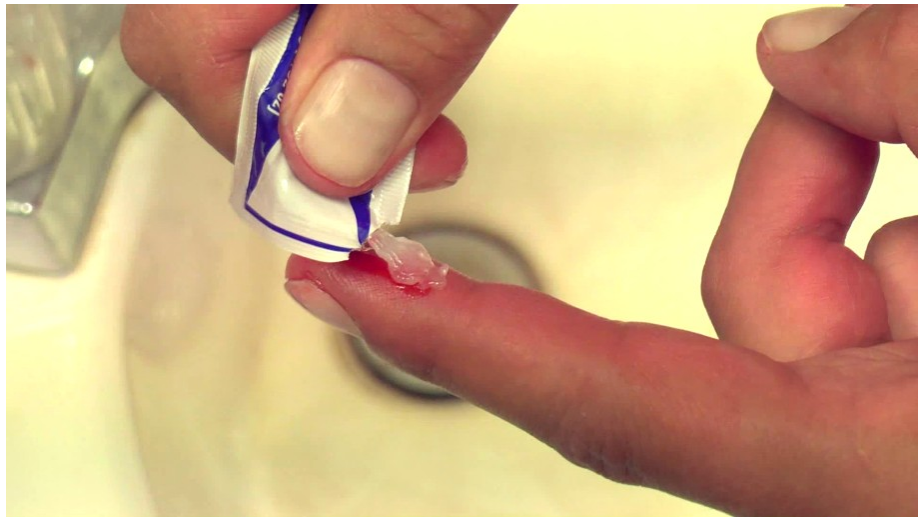
- Clean the wound - Use clean water to rinse the cut thoroughly. Using soap or any type of cleanser could irritate the cut. A wash cloth and soap can be used to clean the area around the cut.

Cuts and Scrapes

•Apply medication to the area - An antibiotic ointment should be applied to the area to help the wound to heal faster and to help fight off any type of infection.

•Dress the cut - Apply a bandage to the area to keep the wound clean. Change the dressing daily or as needed and apply the antibiotic cream each time.

•Watch for infection - Keep an eye on the wound area for possible infection. If the area doesn't heal properly or the area becomes swollen, irritated or red, see your doctor.



Burns

Burns can range from minor to very serious. Before treating, you must determine the extent of the burn.

- 1st degree burns happen when only the outer layer of skin is burned. The skin will be reddish and there might possibly be some swelling and pain.

- 2nd degree burns occur when both the first and second layer of skin is burned. Blisters will form and are accompanied by more severe pain and swelling. If the burn area is small in size it can generally be treated in the same manner as a 1st degree burn.

- 3nd degree burns are very serious and involve all layers of skin and the fat layer beneath the skin. The burn area will appear dry and leathery with white or black charred skin.

Burns

Seek immediate medical attention for any 3rd degree burns and burns which are:

- Located on the hands, feet, face, groin, buttocks, knees, wrist or other body joint;
- Caused by fire or are electrical or chemical in nature; and/or
- Larger than two inches in surface area.

Burns

If the burn is minor, place the area under cool running water for approximately 10 minutes. If the burn blisters, do not “pop” it. Cover the burn loosely with a sterile gauze bandage. Do not use any type of lotion, butter, cream or egg whites on the area. Take a pain reliever such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen or aspirin if needed. Additional treatment is usually not necessary for the burn to heal, but if signs of infection appear seek professional medical help.

Chemical Exposure and Burns

If you come into contact with a hazardous chemical it can continue to affect you until it is removed from the exposed area. Reacting quickly to address the situation can help to minimize the effects of the chemical exposure. Rinse the area with cool running water for at least 15 minutes. Avoid using a strong stream of water and keep the rinse water from flowing to other parts of your body causing additional contamination. As you rinse the affected area, remove any clothing or jewelry with the chemical on them. Never attempt to “neutralize” the area with other chemicals. Follow the first aid measures listed on the chemical’s Safety Data Sheet or follow the safety directions on the container and seek professional medical treatment.

Broken Bones (Fractures)

Every broken bone should be properly attended to by a medical professional. Some fractures are less serious than others and may not require emergency responders. In such cases the victim might be able to see their personal physician or be driven to the ER. In other cases, immediate medical help should be sought. ALWAYS call 911 if:

- The broken bone is the result of a major injury or trauma.
- There is heavy bleeding or bleeding won’t stop after applying pressure for several minutes.
- A bone is protruding out from the skin.
- The injury is located in the back, neck or head.

Broken Bones (Fractures)

In less serious cases do the following:

- Stop any bleeding by applying firm pressure to the area with a clean cloth. DO NOT try to “push” any bone back into place.
- Apply ice to the area to reduce swelling and pain. Never place ice directly on the wound, but instead use an ice pack or wrap the ice in cloth before placing on the affected area.
- Immobilize the wound area, if possible, by placing a splint above and below the fractured area. If you are unsure how to place a splint it is best not to attempt.
    - Do not move the broken bone.
        - Seek professional medical attention as soon as possible.

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

Heat exhaustion is a heat-related illness which can range from mild muscle cramps to heat stroke. Heat exhaustion occurs when the body's normal cooling mechanisms start to fail and the body begins to overheat. You might be more susceptible to heat exhaustion or heat stroke if you have experienced a heat related illness in the past. Causes of heat exhaustion and stroke include:

- Extreme outdoor or indoor heat and high humidity
- Moving from a cool area into a hot area and not having adequate time to adjust to the temperature change
- Wearing heavy and/or restrictive clothing during high temperatures
- Extreme physical work or exercise
- Dehydration
- Other illnesses which cause diarrhea, vomiting and fever leading to
  a weakened state

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

The most common symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Slightly increased body temperature
- Heavy sweating with cool, clammy pale skin
- Feeling fatigued, faint and/or dizzy
- Dark colored urine which is a sign of dehydration
- Dry mouth
- Muscle cramps
- Headache

Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

First aid should be administered quickly. Move victim to a cool place inside or in the shade and have them lie down. Loosen clothing and provide cool drink of water or sports drink (avoid caffeine and alcohol drinks). Give victim a salty food such as a saltine if available. Massage and stretch the victim's muscles. When possible victim should take a cool bath or shower. If after 30 minutes of treatment there is no relief, medical help should be contacted.

Heat stroke is very dangerous and can cause organ or brain damage and even death. Usually, heat stroke progresses from a milder condition such as heat exhaustion and is generally brought about by an extremely high heat index combined with dehydration. The body's normal temperature control system shuts down when heat stroke strikes. The main symptom is an elevated body temperature of 105ºF or more accompanied by disorientation, nausea and sometimes coma.

Heat Exhaustion and Heatstroke

Additional signs include:

- Headache
- Rapid heartbeat
- Shallow, rapid breathing
- Lack of sweating despite the heat
- Fainting

Prompt first aid for heatstroke is essential. Call 911 immediately and then begin to administer first aid until help arrives.

- Move the victim to a cool spot in the shade or an air-condition building and remove any unnecessary clothing
- Soak the body with cool water from a garden hose or with wet sponges while fanning them
- Apply ice packs to the neck, armpits and groin area to assist the body in cooling down
- Provide cool water or other non-alcoholic beverage if they are able to drink it. Remember time is of upmost importance when dealing with heatstroke!

Choking

Choking occurs when an object becomes lodged in a person's throat. Since choking cuts off the flow of oxygen, it is import to act quickly to dislodge the item. Brain damage can occur in as little as four minutes without oxygen. Watch for indications of choking:

- An inability to talk
- Difficulty breathing or coughing
- Lips, nails and skin turning blue
- Loss of consciousness

Choking

If the person is choking, provide first aid and have someone else call 911, if possible. Give five back blows using the heel of your hand to the section of back located between the shoulder blades. Then give five abdominal thrust, also known as the Heimlich maneuver.

- Stand behind the person and wrap your arms around their waist.
- Make a fist and place it just above the person's navel with your thumb facing inward.
- Grab your fist with your other hand and pull quickly inward and upward five times.

Alternate giving five back blows and five abdominal thrusts until the object is dislodged. If the choking person is pregnant or obese you should follow the same procedures except when doing the abdominal thrust place your fist higher, at the base of the breast bone.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

CPR is a procedure used to temporarily maintain partial blood flow to the heart and brain in a person suffering from cardiac arrest or other emergencies where the person has stopped breathing and/or the heart has stopped beating. In such situations, it is better to attempt CPR than simply wait for trained medical help to arrive. Therefore, even untrained people are encouraged to perform a modified method of CPR. The modified method involves performing chest compressions only.

Gently shake the person on the shoulder and ask loudly if they are OK. Look for signs of breathing. If no response, call 911. If an automated external defibrillator or AED, is available turn it on and follow the step by step instructions provided. An AED is an automated device which can analyze a person's situation and advise certain steps to take to help resuscitate them. It will also provide an electrical shock to try and restart a person's heart.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

After using the AED, begin hands only CPR if necessary.

- Place the heel of your hand on the center of the person's chest
- Place your other hand on top of the first hand
- Keeping your arms and elbows straight, position your shoulders directly above your hands
- Push straight down using your body weight, compressing the chest at least two inches then release the pressure allowing the chest to rise. Repeat compressions rapidly at a rate of about 100 per minute
- Continue until trained medical help arrives

In situations such as drowning and drug overdose, the traditional method of

CPR, which involves chest compressions, clearing the airway and mouth-

to-mouth breathing, is much more effective. If someone is trained they should perform full CPR. Remember, it is still better to attempt hands-only CPR than do nothing at all, even if you are not trained.

Conclusion

This training program covered a few possible medical emergencies where first aid could aid not only in limiting the injury and promoting a quicker healing time but could even save a life. Remember, first aid is limited care for an injury or illness, until trained medical professionals arrive.