MIDWEST Always with you.

BASIC FIRST AID

STAYING SAFE

Safety is an ongoing concern that must never leave your thoughts.

There is a primal instinct in many people to dash to the rescue of those in need. Regardless of the dire circumstances of whatever terrible accident or injury you may witness, it's urgent that you keep your wits about you and stay safe.

Safety is an awareness of your surroundings and a healthy fear of unstable situations. By its very nature, and emergency is an unstable situation. If everything were truly under control, nothing bad would've happened in the first place.

If, for example, you see a person struck by a car in a crosswalk, do not rush headlong into the street to see if they are injured. You will no doubt find yourself lying next to them after being struck by the next car barreling down the road.

AVOID MOVING THE VICTIM

Avoid moving the victim unless they are in immediate danger. Moving a victim will make injuries worse, especially in the case of spinal cord injuries.

CALL EMERGENCY SERVICES (911)

Call or tell someone else (a specific person) to call 911 for help as soon as possible. Do not leave the victim alone for an extensive amount of time.

DETERMINE RESPONSIVENESS

If a person in unconscious, try to rouse them by gently shaking and speaking to them.

Remember your ABC's (Airway, Breathing, and Circulation):

- **Airway-Does the person have an obstructed airway?**
  - If the person remains unresponsive when you try to rouse them, carefully roll them onto their back and open his/her airway.
    - Keep head and neck aligned
    - Carefully roll them onto their back while holding their head
    - Open the airway by lifting the chin
- **Breathing-Is the person breathing?**
  - Look, listen and feel for signs of breathing. Look for the victim's chest to rise and fall, listen for sounds of breathing by placing your ear near the nose and mouth, and feel for breath on your cheek.

        - If the victim is breathing, but unconscious, roll them onto their side, keeping the head and heck aligned with the body. This will help drain the mouth and prevent the tongue or vomit from blocking the airway.
- **Circulation- Does the person show a pulse at major pulse points (wrist, carotid artery, groin)?**
    - Look at the victim's color and check their pulse (the carotid artery is a good option; it is located on either side of the neck, below the jawbone). If the victim does not have a pulse, start CPR if you know how.

TREAT BLEEDING SHOCK AND OTHER PROBLEMS AS NEEDED

How to stop bleeding:

- Get the person to lie down. It will lessen the likelihood of shock if you can elevate the legs or position the head lower than the trunk.
- If possible, elevate a wounded limb. It can help control bleeding if a wounded limb can be elevated about the heart.
- Remove dirt and debris, but do not clean the wound thoroughly if bleeding is severe. Your immediate priority is to stop severe bleeding. Cleaning the wound can wait.
- Apply firm pressure directly to the wound until the bleeding stops. Use a pad of clean gauze, dressing, or clothing and apply firm pressure with fingers or a hand to the wound.
- Continue applying pressure steadily. If the injury is on a limb, you can use tape or a cloth wrapped around the wound to maintain pressure. For groin or other parts of the body where you cannot wrap the wound, use a heavy pad and keep using your hands to press on the wound.
- Look for seepage from the wound. Add additional gauze or bandages if the original soaks through.
- Continue applying pressure until the bleeding stops or help arrives.

How to treat a burn:

- Treat first and second degree burns by immersing or flushing with cool water (NO ICE). Do not use creams, butter or other ointments, and do not pop blisters. Third degree burns should be covered with a damp cloth. Remove clothing and jewelry from the burn but do not remove charred clothing that is stuck to burns.

STAY WITH THE VICTIM UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

As the ambulance is responding to your emergency, there are some things that you can do to help emergency crew to find you. Make sure to try to do as many of these things as possible to prepare for the ambulance's arrival:

- Lock up dogs or other pets
- Turn on the porch light
- Gather the victims personal medical information
- Send someone to meet emergency crews and guide them to the victim
- Move cars and furniture out of the way to allow access with a gurney
- Do not leave the victim along for an extensive amount of time

HOW TO HELP A CHOKING VICTIM

For adults and children over 1 year of age, make sure first that they are choking.

- The signs of choking are:
  - Hands clutched to the throat
  - Being able to talk
  - Cannot breathe without difficulty
  - Breathing is noisy
  - Cannot cough effectively
  - Changes in skin color
  - Unconsciousness
- Ask the person, "Are you choking?" Someone who is truly choking will not be able to speak.
- If there is someone nearby, tell them to call 911.
- If the person is conscious, tell them of your intent to perform first aid
- If you are the only person with the victim, do not call 911 first. Do the following steps immediately:
  - Administer 5 blows with the heel of your hand
    - Take the bottom of part of your hand (heel) and deliver 5 separate forceful strikes between the person's shoulder blades
    - Keep the blows separate. Try to dislodge the object with each one
    - Look for improvement after each blow
  - If the blows to the back fail, perform 5 abdominal thrusts
    - Get behind the victim
    - Wrap your arms around their waist
    - Take the underside of one fist and place it near the middle of the person's abdomen, just above the naval and below the breastbone
    - Take that fist in your other hand
    - Pull inward and upward into the victim's abdomen with quick upward thrusts
  - Alternate between 5 back blows and 5 abdominal thrusts until the object becomes dislodged
  - Make sure the object is completely gone
  - Check to see if normal breathing has returned

Information taken from http://www.wlklhow.com/Do-Basic-First-Aid and http://firstaid.about.com/od/cpr/ss/htm