



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.

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.

Important

If a person is unconscious, 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.

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.

Your **Self Care** Pharmacist

- 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 1126.

DO NOT INDUCE VOMITING.

Basic first-aid kit

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

For more information

Consumer Medicine Information (CMI) leaflets – your pharmacist can advise on availability.

NPS Medicines Line – phone 1300 888 763 Monday to Friday, 9am to 6pm EST.

The Poisons Information Centre on 131 126 from anywhere in Australia.

Pharmacy Self Care Support – telephone 1300 369 772 and ask for the Pharmacy Self Care Field Officer.

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

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