

First Aid Basics

Content adapted from

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/basic-first-aid-procedures-1298578#toc-abcs-of-first-aid>

<https://unchartedsupplyco.com/en-ca/blogs/the-four-pillars/basic-first-aid>

<https://cprcertificationnow.com/blogs/mycpr-now-blog/essential-first-aid-tips-everyone-should-know>

First aid is the immediate care a sick or injured person gets. In some cases, it may be the only care a person needs. In others, first aid is a way to prevent a person's condition from worsening and keep them alive until paramedics arrive or they are taken to the hospital.

The best way to prepare for these events is to get official first-aid training. In the meantime, here are some basic life-saving steps.

When Providing First Aid

- 1) Stay calm
- 2) Assess the situation, check the scene for danger before you provide help
- 3) Get consent before providing assistance (for an unconscious person, consent is implied). Get consent from a parent or guardian before assisting a minor
- 4) Follow The “Three P’s”:
 - Preserve life
 - Prevent further injury
 - Promote recovery

ABCs of First Aid:

- **Airway:** If someone’s not breathing, the first thing you need to do is **open their airway**.
- **Breathing:** If you have cleared a person’s airway but they’re still not breathing, **provide rescue breathing**.
- **Circulation:** As you are doing rescue breathing, **perform chest compressions** to keep the person’s blood circulating. If the person is not responsive, check their pulse. If their heart has stopped, **provide chest compressions**.

Another version of ABC:

- **Awake?** If the person is not awake, try to wake them. If they don’t wake up, make sure someone is calling 911 and move on to the next step.
- **Breathing?** If a person is not awake and not breathing, start rescue breathing and chest compressions. Then, move to the next step.
- **Continue care:** When you call for help, follow instructions from 911 or continue treatment until an ambulance arrives.

Some first aid courses also include **D** and **E**:

- **D** can stand for: **Disability** assessment, **deadly bleeding**, or automated external **defibrillator** (AED). An AED is a device that shocks the heart to make it start beating again.¹
- **E** can stand for: **Examination** (checking the person for signs of injury, bleeding, allergies, or other problems once you know they’re breathing and their heart is beating).

First Aid Kit Essentials

- Basic Supplies: Bandages, antiseptic wipes, adhesive tape, scissors, tweezers, sterile gauze, and gloves.
- Medications: Pain relievers, antihistamines, and any personal medications.

Common First Aid Scenarios

Cuts and Scrapes

Clean the Wound: Rinse with clean water to remove debris.

Stop Bleeding: Apply gentle pressure with a clean cloth or bandage.

Protect the Wound: Apply a sterile bandage or dressing.

Severe Bleeding

Apply Pressure: Use a clean cloth or bandage to apply firm pressure.

Elevate the Injury: If possible, raise the injured area above the heart.

Seek Professional Help: Severe bleeding requires medical attention.

Sprains and Strains

Rest the Injured Area

Ice the Injury: Apply ice wrapped in a cloth for short periods. (Ice restricts the blood vessels, which reduces blood flow and swelling).

Compress with a Bandage

Elevate the Injured Limb (and stay off it as much as possible)

Broken Bones

RICE as above for sprains and strains

Do not try to straighten or move a fractured limb. Use a splint or padding to stabilize and immobilize

Heat Exhaustion (due to prolonged exposure to high temperatures especially when doing strenuous exercise or lack of water)

Symptoms: cool moist skin, heavy sweating, dizziness, muscle cramps, nausea, headaches

Treatment: Get out of the sun (find shade, shelter, cover with materials that can block sunlight)

Provide water

Place cool cloth on forehead and back of neck to lower their body temperature

Hypothermia (due to prolonged exposure to cold temperatures; body temperature drops below 95°F)

Symptoms: red and cold skin, shivering, slurred speech or mumbling, confusion

Treatment: Get out of the cold (remove wet clothing, find shelter, lie on and cover with blankets, use heat packs)

Provide warm fluids

Dealing with Shock

Lay the Person Down: If they are breathing, lay them on their back.

Elevate Legs: If there are no injuries to the head, neck, back, or legs, elevate the legs.

Cover for Warmth: Use a blanket or clothing to keep them warm.

Allergic Reactions/Anaphylaxis (bee stings, food, drug ingredients)

Ask the person if they use an EpiPen and if they have one with them

Keep person calm and lay the person on their back, with feet elevated and clothing loosened to ease breathing

If appropriate, use the EpiPen. Wait 5-15 minutes and give a second dose if required.

Avoid giving them food or drink

Burns

- Minor burns: First- and second degree: outer and some inner layers are burnt. Skin is red, has blistering.

- Major burns: Third- and fourth degree: significant penetration of the inner layers and/or tissues. The wound has a whitish or blackened color.

Cool the Burn: Run cool (not cold) water over the burn for several minutes.

Cover the Burn: Use a sterile, non-fluffy cloth or dressing but do not apply ointments.

Don't Pop Blisters: They protect against infection.

Major burns require medical attention.

Choking

Encourage Coughing: If the person can cough or speak, let them try to dislodge the object.

Back Blows and Abdominal Thrusts: If coughing doesn't work, use back blows and abdominal thrusts (Heimlich maneuver).

Using an AED (Automated External Defibrillator)

Locate an AED: In public places, AEDs are often available.

Follow Instructions: The AED will guide you through the process.

Good Samaritan Laws

<https://www.c2firstaيداquatics.com/understanding-the-good-samaritan-laws/#:~:text=Bystanders%20in%20other%20provinces%2C%20including,they%20cannot%20be%20held%20liable.>

When first aiders or bystanders rush to help someone in an emergency, they have protection from financial liability under the Good Samaritan laws. When bystanders assist while using reasonable care, they cannot face a lawsuit if they unintentionally cause further injuries.

Bystanders in Ontario, don't have to assist unless they are at the scene of a motor vehicle accident. However, if they help someone in a medical emergency, and their actions cause further problems, they cannot be held liable. The Good Samaritan Laws encourage people to help others instead of fearing legal repercussions.

When faced with an emergency, anyone that helps must only provide the level of assistance covered by their training. Therefore, a first aider cannot perform anything that was not included in their course, for example, an emergency tracheotomy. However, if they broke a rib during CPR is not considered reckless.




Therefore, the most common elements of the Good Samaritan Laws include the following:

- Don't move a person unless they are in a situation that places them in danger
- Before giving help, always ask the person for permission if they are responsive. If they are unconscious, consent is implied. Ask a parent or guardian before assisting a minor.
- Check for life-threatening conditions before providing any care
- Call 911 to dispatch emergency services
- Provide the appropriate care without doing anything reckless and continue doing this until trained help arrives

Some situations where the Good Samaritan Laws may not protect a bystander or first aider are if they have acted with extreme negligence or recklessness. Additionally, if someone has started care, they may not abandon the person until help arrives.

First Aid App



	<p>The global standard in first aid content</p> <p>The official First Aid App of The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) puts lifesaving advice in your hands. Download the app for FREE on your Apple or Android smartphone or tablet now! The app helps you maintain your First Aid and CPR skills while helping you respond to everyday emergencies by providing instant access to simple step-by-step advice.</p> <p> </p>
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