**Handling Emergency Situations**

* Call a family member and if required a doctor, if the elder:
  + Complains of chest pain, sweating or breathlessness – it may be a heart attack
  + Displays decreased movement of one or more limbs, sudden weakness of a part of the body, or facial distortion – it may be paralysis
  + Has fever with no other symptoms
  + Complains of headache for more than 24 hours
  + Complains of unexplained abdominal pain – it may indicate appendicitis or gall bladder issues or uterus issues in women
* If the elder suffers a serious fall when you are alone in the house with the elder, call the doctor
* In case of a theft, secure the elder and call the police
* In case of a fire or earthquake, call for help and move the elder to a safe location
* **Giving Insulin Shots**
* Syringe and insulin pen are the two main methods of giving an insulin shot to an elder
* Before deciding on the method, check with the elder’s family and doctor
* Before giving the shot, make sure you have the correct insulin and that it has not expired
* Also match the last marking on the syringe and the number written on the insulin bottle
* When reusing, do not let the needle touch any unrequired surfaces
* Keep the needle capped when you are not using it
* Reuse a needle only on the same person
* If the needle seems dull or bent, change it immediately
* You can store an insulin pen in the refrigerator until its expiration date
* If the elder under your care is taking insulin, always watch out for signs like restlessness, sweating, or tiredness; these signs may indicate low blood sugar
* **Common Home Tests for the Elder**
* To check temperature using a digital thermometer:
  + Switch on and place in the mouth or under the arm
  + Wait till it beeps
  + Read temperature
  + Use alcohol rub to sanitize the thermometer
  + To check pulse:
  + Place the first and second fingertips firmly at the wrist
  + Start counting the pulse when the seconds hand of the clock is at 12
  + Count pulse for 60 seconds and note the number
  + To check the oxygen saturation using a pulse oximeter:
  + Switch on the device
  + Put the probe onto the finger

Record the readings

* To check blood pressure using a digital sphygmomanometer:
  + Ask the elder to sit still and place their arm at heart level
  + Wrap the cuff around the upper arm
  + Start the machine
  + Note the readings
* To check the elder’s blood sugar using a glucose meter:
* Ask the elder to wash their hands with soap and dry them
* Remove a test strip from the container
* Insert the test strip into the meter
* Prick the elder’s finger with the needle or lancet
* Squeeze the finger until a drop of blood forms
* Touch the test strip to the blood

Note the blood sugar reading

**Common Blood & Urine Tests of the Elder**

* For a diabetes test:
  + The elder should fast for at least eight hours before the test and can drink only water
  + The elder must not smoke, chew gum, or exercise before the test
  + You should take the elder for the test early in the morning
* For blood lipid tests, the elder must not eat for 12 hours
* For iron tests, the elder should not take iron tablets 12 hours before the test
* For any blood test:
  + Inform the nurse if the elder is prone to feeling sick after the test
  + To calm down the elder, ask them to breathe deeply
  + Ask the elder to look away when blood is being drawn
  + Tell them to relax when the needle is being inserted
  + Try to talk to the elder through the test
* After a blood test, ensure that the elder holds the cotton wool in place for some time
* For urine tests:
  + Give clear step-by-step instructions to the elder
  + Give them privacy, while ensuring their safety
* **Common Medical Scans of the Elder**
* Before an X-ray:
  + Remind the elder that they will need to change into a robe
  + Ask the elder to avoid wearing jewellery
  + The elder may have to remove eyeglasses
  + Remind the elder to hold their breath when the X-ray picture is being taken
* For the gall bladder ultrasound, the elder must fast for at least six hours prior to the examination
* For the pelvic ultrasound test, the bladder must be full
* For the CT scan:
  + Remind the elder that they will need to change into a robe
  + Ask the elder to avoid wearing jewellery
  + If advised by the doctor, the elder must fast for the required duration
  + If the elder is claustrophobic, the doctor may give medication to calm them down
  + If the elder is allergic to any substance, inform the doctor
  + Ask the elder to lie still inside the machine
  + Explain that you will need to wait outside
* For the MRI scan:
  + Remind the elder that they will need to change into a robe
  + Ask the elder to avoid wearing jewellery
  + The elder cannot take the scan if they have pacemaker or metal implants
  + If elder is claustrophobic, , the doctor may give medication to calm them down
* **Handling Health Emergencies**
* If the person is bleeding severely, call for medical help. Till then, try to control the bleeding
* In case of internal bleeding, call the doctor and do not give the person anything to eat or drink
* If the person suffers from severe burns, wrap the person in clean sheets and take them to a hospital
* If you suspect the person has consumed poison, rush the person to a hospital
* In case of exposure, get the person dry and warm as soon as possible
* If the person hits their head to a hard surface while falling, a concussion or an injury may occur; call the doctor
* In case of an electric shock, switch off the electricity and move the person away from the source
* To remove the object that is choking the person, give them a firm thump between the shoulder blades
* In any situation, if the person is not breathing, give them artificial respiration
* f the person is breathing, but is unconscious, lay them on their stomach and turn their head to one side; draw up the arm and leg of that side