

## **A. BASIC FIRST AID TECHNIQUES**

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In this chapter you will learn about:

- Aims of first aid.
- First aid and the law.
- Dealing with an emergency.
- Resuscitation (basic CPR).
- Recovery position.
- Initial top to toe assessment.
- Hygiene and hand washing.
- First aid overview flow chart.

## **A.1      AIMS OF FIRST AID**

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First aid is the first assistance or treatment given to a casualty or a sick person for any injury or sudden illness before the arrival of an ambulance, the arrival of a qualified paramedical or medical person or before arriving at a facility that can provide professional medical care.

As a consequence of disaster or civil strife people suffer injuries which requires urgent care and transportation to the nearest healthcare facility.

### **A.1.1      AIMS OF FIRST AID**

The aims of first aid are:

- to preserve life,
- to prevent the worsening of one's medical condition,
- to promote recovery, and
- to help to ensure safe transportation to the nearest healthcare facility.

### **A.1.2      THE FIRST AIDER**

A first aider is the term describing any person who has received a certificate from an authorised training body indicating that he or she is qualified to render first aid.

First aid certifications issued by St. John Ambulance Association and the Indian Red Cross Society are awarded to candidates who have attended a course of theoretical and practical work and who have passed a professionally supervised examination.

## **A.2 FIRST AID AND THE LAW**

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### **A.2.1 INDIAN GOOD SAMARITAN PROTECTION GUIDELINES**

A Good Samaritan in legal terms refers to "someone who renders aid in an emergency to an injured person on a voluntary basis".

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has published the Indian Good Samaritan and Bystanders Protection Guidelines in The Gazette of India in May 2015 (Notification No 25035/101/2014-RS dated 12 May 2015). The guidelines are to be followed by hospitals, police and other authorities for the protection of Good Samaritans.

Following guidelines are included (sub-selection of the guidelines):

1. A bystander or Good Samaritan, including an eyewitness of a road accident may take an injured to the nearest hospital and should be allowed to leave immediately. The eyewitness has to provide his address. No questions are to be asked.
2. The bystander or Good Samaritan shall not be liable for any civil and criminal liability.
3. A bystander or Good Samaritan who makes a phone call to inform the police or emergency services for the person lying injured on the road cannot be compelled to give his name or personal details on the phone or in person. The disclosure of contact details of the Good Samaritan is to be voluntary.
4. The lack of response by a (medical) doctor in an emergency pertaining to road accidents (where he is expected to provide care) shall constitute 'Professional Misconduct'.

### **A.2.2 DUTY OF GIVING CARE**

Usually, if a volunteer comes to the aid of an injured or sick person who is a stranger, the person giving the aid owes the stranger a duty of being reasonably careful.

In relation to the "duty of giving care", there is currently (2015) no legal obligation for first aiders to provide first aid in a general public context, not unless it's part of a job description. First aid officers in workplaces and school teachers have a duty of care.

Once a first aider begins to provide first aid, a duty of care is established and the first aider then has an obligation to fulfil the duty of care.

If a road user is involved in an accident, there is a legal requirement to stay at the scene, assist the injured and report the incident to the police.

Not fulfilling a duty of giving care leaves the first aider open to questions of negligence. Whilst there is no law that forces anyone to treat a casualty this does not mean that one can simply leave a casualty who you know is in danger. To do so may make you liable through your omission to act. If you are not happy to provide first aid there are several things you can and should do including (but not limited to):

- inform someone else, such as the police or the emergency services;
- make the area around the casualty safe for yourself, others and the casualty;
- monitor the casualty and/or find out what happened; and
- comfort the casualty.

### **A.2.3      CONSENT OF THE PERSON IN NEED**

A conscious person has the right to either refuse or accept care. If the person is conscious, you must ask for his consent before commencing any first aid. If he refuses your help, stay nearby and call the police and emergency services, who can then deal with the situation.

If the person is under 18, it is best to obtain consent from his parent or guardian if they are present. If they refuse your help, stay nearby and call the police and the emergency services, who can then deal with the situation.

If the person is unconscious or unable to formally consent, his consent is inferred and you can then give the necessary first aid.

### **A.2.4      PRIVACY**

In any first aid situation, the first aider must take steps to assist the person to maintain personal privacy. This means things like, keeping crowds away, putting up a screen if necessary, and covering any exposed body parts with blankets, or sheets, if available.

The first aider also needs to take steps to maintain confidentiality. This means not talking about the incident to other people, or answering questions from the media, unless you have permission from the person involved in the accident.

### **A.2.5      NEGLIGENCE**

If a volunteer comes to the aid of an injured or sick person who is a stranger, the person giving the aid owes the stranger a duty of being reasonably careful.

Not fulfilling, or breaking a duty of care leaves the first aider open to questions of negligence. It is unlikely that a first aider would be sued as long as not practiced outside the parameters of the techniques taught at the first aid training.

## A.3 DEALING WITH AN EMERGENCY

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Emergency situations vary greatly but there are four main steps that always apply:

1. Make the area safe.
2. Evaluate the injured person's condition.
3. Seek help.
4. Give first aid.

### A.3.1 STEP 1: MAKE THE AREA SAFE

Your own safety should always come first.

As a first aider, you should:

- try to find out what has just happened;
- check for any danger: is there a threat from traffic, fire, electricity cables, etc.;
- never approach the scene of an accident if you are putting yourself in danger;
- do your best to protect both the injured person(s) and other people on the scene;
- be aware that the property of the injured person is at risk. Theft can occur. So mind your safety, and
- seek police or emergency help if an accident scene is unsafe and you cannot offer help without putting yourself in danger.



An important part of safety also includes washing your hands and wearing gloves or a protection when coming in contact with the injured or sick person's blood or body fluids.

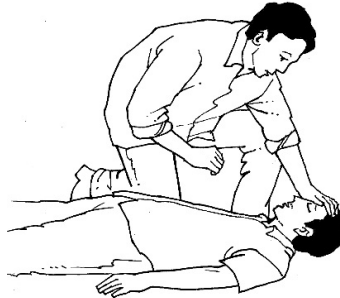


In case of road accidents, as a first aider, you should:

- always follow the traffic rules;
- ask other people to warn traffic about the event;
- if possible, place a warning sign at a good distance, at least 30 meters to either side of the accident, to warn traffic. Do not forget to remove the warning signs afterwards;
- seek help from the police or emergency services;
- not allow anybody to smoke near an accident site;
- switch off the engine of every car involved in the accident; and

- try to apply the handbrake of vehicles involved in the accident to prevent them from moving. You can also put something against the tyres to prevent rolling.

As a general rule, the injured person should not be moved from the scene of an accident. Any movement may make the injury worse if there has been a head, neck, back, and leg or arm injury.



Only move injured people if:

- the injured person is in more danger if he is left there,
- the situation cannot be made safe,
- medical help will not arrive soon, and
- you can do so without putting yourself in danger.

### **A.3.2 STEP 2: EVALUATE THE CONDITION OF THE SICK OR INJURED PERSON**

If it is safe, you can evaluate the sick or injured person's condition. Always check that he is conscious and breathing normally. Situations in which consciousness or breathing are impaired are often life threatening.

Bleeding can also happen inside the body and can be life-threatening although the loss of blood is not seen.

Techniques of resuscitation (CPR), the recovery position, etc. are explained in this manual.

### **A.3.3 STEP 3: SEEK HELP**



Once you have evaluated the sick or injured person's condition you can decide if help is needed urgently.

If help is needed, ask a bystander to call for help. Ask him to come back and confirm that help is underway.

If you call for help, be prepared to have the following information available:

- the location where the help is required (address, street, specific reference points, location; if in a building: floor, room);
- the telephone or mobile number you are calling from;
  - the nature of the problem;
  - what happened (car accident, fall, sudden illness, explosion, ...);
  - how many injured;
  - nature of the injuries (if you know);
  - what type of help is needed:
    - ambulance,
    - police,
    - fire brigade, or
    - other services;
- and any other information that might help.

You might be asked to give your name. Always stay calm and answer their questions calmly. The call takers are professionals and will give you further guidance.

If an ambulance can be obtained in a short time, it is best to call for one and use it to transport the injured or sick person to the healthcare facility. An ambulance is the best way to transport ill or injured persons, but they are not always and everywhere quickly available.

You can always ask the police for help.

If no help is available, you will have to arrange transport yourself (in a van, a truck, a car, an auto-rickshaw, a motorbike, a scooter, a bike-rickshaw, a bike...). Always move the sick or injured person with great care.

### **A.3.4 STEP 4: PROVIDE FIRST AID**

Give first aid in accordance with the instructions given in the following chapters in this manual. When providing first aid, try to protect an ill or injured person from cold and heat.

Do not give anything to eat or drink to a person who is:

- severely injured,
- feeling nausea,
- becoming sleepy, or
- falling unconscious.



In fact, as a general principle, the rule is not to give a casualty anything to drink or eat. Important exceptions include hypothermia (low body temperature), hypoglycaemic shock (low blood sugar in a diabetes patient), diarrhoea and fever leading to dehydration and in case of heat exhaustion or heatstroke. The details can be reviewed in the specific chapters on these conditions.

Be aware that experiencing an emergency situation is a very stressful experience for the injured or sick person.

To support him through the ordeal, follow these simple tips:

- tell the sick or injured person your name, explain how you are going to help him and reassure him. This will help to relax him;
- listen to the person and show concern and kindness;
- make him as comfortable as possible;
- if he is worried, tell him that it is normal to be afraid;
- if it is safe to do so, encourage family and loved ones to stay with him; and
- explain to the sick or injured person what has happened and what is going to happen.

### **A.3.5 WHEN CAN I STOP PROVIDING FIRST AID?**

The question arises when your first aid 'duty' comes to an end?

Within first aid, CPR is a lifesaving activity. But when can you stop giving CPR? There are four reasons allowing you to stop CPR:

- you see a sign of life, such as breathing;
- someone trained in first aid or a medical professional takes over;
- you are too exhausted to continue; or
- the scene becomes unsafe for you to continue.



## **A.4      STRESS WHEN GIVING FIRST AID**

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It is only normal to feel stress if you are suddenly faced with the need to give first aid in a real emergency.

Try to bring your emotions under control before you proceed. You may take some time to stand back from the situation and regain your calm. Do not set about the task too hastily and do not under any circumstances place your own safety at risk.

It is not always easy to process a traumatic event emotionally. It is not unusual for first aiders to experience difficulty when working through their emotions afterwards. Talk to your friends, family, fellow first aiders or someone else. If you are still worried, talk to a professional and seek counselling.

## **A.5 RESUSCITATION (BASIC CPR)**

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Reviving someone who is unconscious and/or not breathing or not breathing normally is called resuscitation.

If the victim is not breathing or is not breathing normally, any source of suffocation should be removed and resuscitation is to be started.

Chest compressions with or without rescue breathings are performed by an individual during cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in an attempt to restore spontaneous circulation.

For untrained or minimally trained first aid providers treating an adult victim, compression-only CPR is recommended. These chest compressions ensure a small but crucial supply of blood to the heart and brain.

For formally trained first aid providers (and professionals) treating an adult victim, compression with breaths is recommended. If the trained first aid provider is unable or unwilling, or in any other circumstance, compression-only CPR may be substituted for compression with breaths.

For babies and children under one year, compressions with breaths are always recommended.

### **A.5.1 WHAT DO I SEE AND ENQUIRE?**

In case of a cardiac arrest (heart stops functioning) you might notice the following signs:

- sudden collapse,
- loss of consciousness,
- no breathing,
- no pulse (however this is not always easy for laypeople to confirm).

#### **A.5.1.1 HOW TO OBSERVE RESPONSIVENESS AND CONSCIOUSNESS?**

Unconsciousness occurs when a person is suddenly unable to respond to stimuli like sound or pain, and appears to be asleep. A person may be unconscious for a few seconds (as is the case with fainting) or for longer periods of time.

People who become unconscious do not respond to loud sounds or shaking. They may even stop breathing or their pulse may become faint. This calls for immediate emergency attention. The sooner the person receives emergency first aid, the better it is.

The AVPU scale (an acronym from "alert, voice, pain, unresponsiveness") is a system by which a first aider can measure and record a patient's responsiveness, indicating the level of consciousness. It is based on the casualty's eye opening, verbal and movement (motor) responses.

The AVPU scale has only four possible outcomes:

- A – Alert.

The person is fully awake (although not necessarily oriented). The person will spontaneously open eyes, will respond to voice (although may be confused) and will have bodily motor function.

- V – Responding to voice.

The person makes some kind of response when you talk to him. It could be opening his eyes, responding to your questions or initiating a move. These responses could be as little as a grunt, moan, or slight movement of a limb when prompted by the voice of the rescuer.

- P – Responding to pain.

The patient makes a response of any kind on the application of pain stimulus, such as a central pain stimulus like a rub on his breastbone or a peripheral stimulus such as squeezing his fingers.

Patients with some level of consciousness (a fully conscious patient would not require any pain stimulus) may respond by using their voice, moving their eyes, or moving part of their body (including abnormal posturing).

- U - Unresponsiveness also noted as 'Unconsciousness'.

This outcome is recorded if the patient does not give any eye, voice or motor response to voice or pain.



To check a person's responsiveness/consciousness state check the following:

1. A person who looks around, speaks, responds clearly to questions, feels touch and moves or walks around, is considered alert (A).
2. The person opens his eyes and responds to simple questions:
  - "What is your name?"
  - "Where do you live?"
  - "How old are you?"

The person responds to simple commands:

- "Squeeze my hand."
- "Move your arm/leg/foot/hand."

If the person responds, he is responsive to voice (V).

3. If there is still no response, pinch the person and see if he opens his eyes or moves.

If the person responds to pain, he is responsive to pain (P)

If the person does not react to any of these stimuli, he is in an unconscious state (U).

Note that a person might only partially respond to the stimuli you provide (sound, touch, pain) and might be in an in-between (groggy) state.



Checking if a casualty is conscious or unconscious should only take a few seconds and should not delay checking for the breathing.

More information on unconsciousness is given in the respective chapter.

#### **A.5.1.2 HOW TO OBSERVE THE BREATHING?**

The airway may be narrowed or blocked making breathing noisy or impossible. Reasons for blockage may be:

- Loss of muscular control in the throat may allow the tongue to sag back and block the air passage.
- When the reflexes are impaired, saliva may lie in the back of the throat, blocking the airway.
- Any foreign body in the throat may block the air passage e.g. vomit, blood, dentures etc.



It is essential to establish a clear airway immediately. Unless you can clearly see that the person is breathing normally, an unconscious person must be turned onto his back to unblock the breathing passage and to check for breathing. Unblocking the breathing passage takes priority over concerns about a potential spinal injury.

To observe the breathing do following:

1. If the person is unconscious and is not on his back, turn him on to his back.
2. Kneel beside the casualty.
3. Lift the chin forwards with the index and middle fingers of one hand while pressing the forehead backwards with the palm of the other hand. This manoeuvre will lift the tongue forward and clear the airways.



4. Observe breathing by listening, feeling and looking
5. After opening the victim's airway, check to see if the victim is breathing.

To do this, place your cheek in front of the victim's mouth (about 3-5 cm away) while looking down his chest (towards his feet).

If desired, you can also gently place a hand on the center of the victim's chest. This allows you to observe whether the victim is breathing in the following ways:

- a. *look* for chest/abdominal movement,
- b. *listen* to breathing sounds,
- c. *feel* the air coming out of the nose or mouth.

- ❗ In the first minutes after cardiac arrest it often appears as if the person is trying to breathe. It can appear as if the person is barely breathing or is taking infrequent noisy gasps. It is important not to confuse this with normal breathing and you should start resuscitation immediately.



6. If the casualty's chest still fails to rise, first assume that the airway is not fully open. Once the airway is cleared the casualty may begin breathing spontaneously.

Else, clear the airway by removing any visible item that is blocking the airway:

- Hook your first two fingers covered with clean cloth/gloves.
- Sweep round inside the mouth/ throat.
- Check again the breathing.

- ❗ One should not spend time searching for hidden obstructions. Care should be taken not to push any object further down the throat.

- ❗ Be careful: do not put your fingers in somebody's closed mouth.

More information on the breathing can be found in the respective chapter.

### **A.5.1.3 HOW TO OBSERVE THE PULSE?**

Feeling the pulse is not always easy. Feeling the pulse during an emergency at the wrist is often unreliable.



The pulse can be felt by placing the finger tips gently on the voice box and sliding them down into the hollow between the voice box and the adjoining muscle.

Do not lose time trying to locate and feel the pulse. The current resuscitation guidelines for laypeople direct that resuscitation (CPR) is to be started when the person is not breathing or not breathing normally and does not require to check the pulse.

More information on the pulse can be found in the respective chapter.

## **A.5.2 RESUSCITATION OF A PERSON WHO IS NOT BREATHING OR NOT BREATHING NORMALLY**

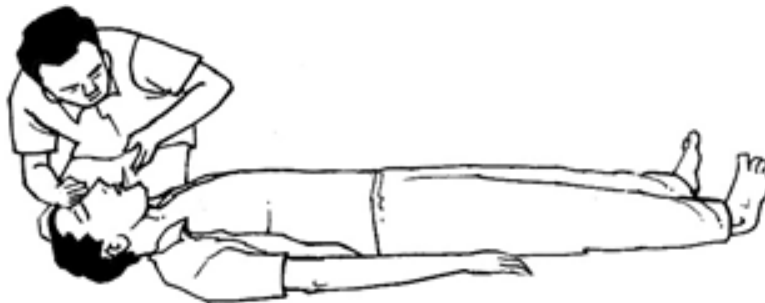
### **A.5.2.1 SAFETY FIRST AND CALL FOR HELP**

1. Make sure there is no danger to you, the person who needs help and bystanders before giving help.
2. The person urgently needs help. Shout or call for help if you are alone but do not leave the person unattended. Ask a bystander to seek help or to arrange urgent transport to the nearest healthcare facility. Tell him to come back to you to confirm if help has been secured.

### **A.5.2.2 SECURE AN OPEN AIRWAY**

❗ The airway may be narrowed or blocked making breathing noisy or impossible. It is essential to establish a clear airway immediately. Unblocking the breathing passage takes priority over concerns about a potential spinal injury.

3. If the person is not on his back, turn him on to his back.
4. Kneel beside the casualty.
5. Lift the chin forwards with the index and middle fingers of one hand while pressing the forehead backwards with the palm of the other hand. This manoeuvre will lift the tongue forward and clear the airways.



chin lift pic

6. Check for breathing.
  - a. Look for chest/abdominal movement.
  - b. Listen to breathing sounds.
  - c. Feel the air coming out of the nose or mouth.
7. If the casualty's chest still fails to rise, first assume that the airway is not fully open. Once the airway is cleared the casualty may begin breathing spontaneously.
8. Else, clear the airway by removing any visible item that is blocking the airway: Hook your first two fingers covered with clean cloth/gloves and sweep round inside the mouth/ throat.

❗ One should not spend time searching for hidden obstructions. Care should be taken not to push any object further down the throat.

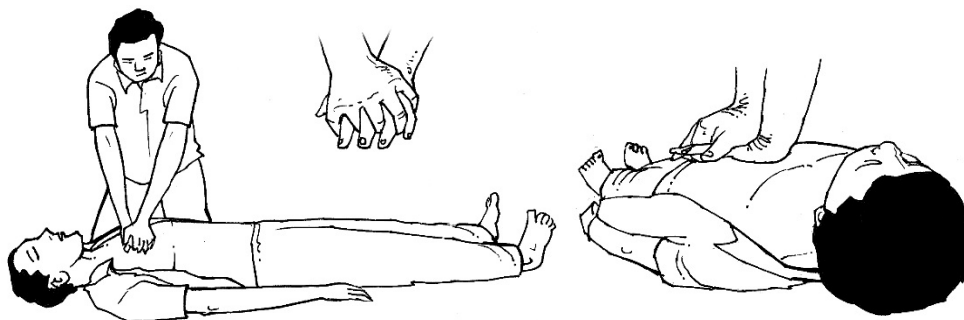
❗ Be careful: do not put your fingers in somebody's closed mouth.

9. If the breathing restarts, place the patient in the recovery position (see recovery position).

If the casualty still does not breathe, start CPR immediately.

### **A.5.2.3 CPR: HOW TO GIVE CHEST COMPRESSIONS?**

1. Turn the casualty on his back on a hard surface, if not already.
2. Kneel next to the casualty, beside his upper arm.



3. Place the heel of one hand in the center of the person's chest.
4. Place the heel of the other hand on top of your first hand.

❗ If the person's age is below puberty, only use one hand.

❗ If the victim is a baby, do not use this technique but apply the technique of CPR for babies and children under the age of one year.

5. Lock your fingers of both hands together.

❗ Do not apply pressure to the person's ribs. Nor should you press the upper part of the stomach or the bottom end of the breast bone.

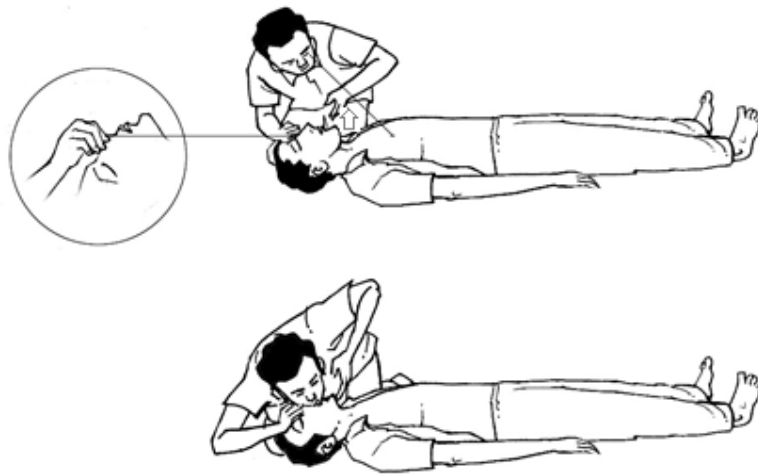
6. Make sure your shoulders are directly above the person's chest.
7. With outstretched arms, push five to maximum six centimetres downwards.
8. Release the pressure and avoid leaning on the chest between compressions to allow full chest recoil. The compression and release should be of equal duration.

❗ Each time you press down allow the chest to rise fully again. This will let blood flow back to the heart.

9. Do not allow your hands to shift or come away from the breastbone.
10. Give 30 chest compressions in this way at a rate of 100 compressions a minute (you may go faster, but not more than 120 compressions a minute). This equates to just fewer than two compressions a second.

#### A.5.2.4 CPR: HOW TO GIVE RESCUE BREATHS?

- ❗ If for some reason you cannot or do not want to give rescue breaths, you can just continue giving chest compressions (five to maximum six centimetre deep at a rate of 100 compressions a minute).



1. Put one hand on the person's forehead and tilt back his head.
2. Put your other hand on the bony part of the chin and lift the chin.
3. Then pinch the person's nose with one hand that is on his forehead.
5. Take a normal breath and then put your mouth completely over the person's mouth and seal with your lips. Calmly blow your air into the mouth of the person's for one second. Check if the person's chest rises.
6. If the chest does not rise, take the following steps:
  - a. Check if anything is in the person's mouth.  
If so, remove any visible items that may block the airway.
  - b. Check that the head is well tilted and the chin is lifted properly.
7. Start another series of 30 chest compressions prior to trying to blow air into the person's mouth again.

❗ In any case, make no more than two attempts to blow air into the person.

❗ Chest compressions and rescue breaths are tiring to administer. If there are a few trained rescuers present, it is best to alternate with each other.

To ensure that the quality of the chest compressions remains optimal, the rescuers should switch every two minutes:

- The first rescuer gives 30 chest compressions followed by two ventilations and another set of 30 chest compressions and two ventilations.
- Then another rescuer takes over and repeats the above steps and switch again.

The switches should happen with minimal interruption and as quickly and smoothly as possible.

8. Do not interrupt the resuscitation until:



- the victim starts to wake up, moves, opens his eyes and breathes normally;
- help (trained in CPR) arrives and takes over;
- you become too exhausted to continue; or
- the area becomes unsafe for you to continue.

#### **A.5.2.5 HYGIENE**

Wash your hands after taking care of the person. Use soap and water to wash your hands. If no soap is available, you can use ash to wash your hands. Alcohol-based sanitizers can also be used, if available.

### **A.5.3 RESUSCITATION OF BABY/CHILD (LESS THAN ONE YEAR OLD) WHO IS NOT BREATHING OR NOT BREATHING NORMALLY**

#### **A.5.3.1 SAFETY FIRST AND CALL FOR HELP**

1. Make sure there is no danger to you before giving help.
2. The child needs urgent help. Shout or call for help if you are alone but do not leave the person unattended. Ask a bystander to seek help or to arrange urgent transport to the nearest healthcare facility. Tell him to come back to you to confirm that help has been secured.

#### **A.5.3.2 HOW TO SECURE AN OPEN AIRWAY OF A BABY/CHILD LESS THAN ONE YEAR OLD?**

❗ The airway may be narrowed or blocked making breathing noisy or impossible. It is essential to establish a clear airway immediately. Unblocking the breathing passage takes priority over concerns about a potential spinal injury.

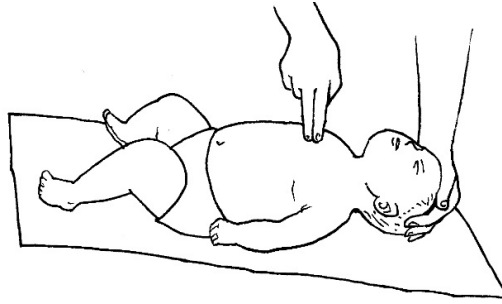
3. Lay the baby/child down on the floor or hard and safe surface.



4. Move the baby's/child head backwards and lift its chin slightly. This manoeuvre will lift the tongue forward and clear the airways.
5. Check for breathing.
  - a. Look for chest/abdominal movement.
  - b. Listen to breathing sounds.
  - c. Feel the air coming out of the nose or mouth.

If the baby still does not breathe, begin CPR immediately.

#### **A.5.3.3 CPR: HOW TO GIVE CHEST COMPRESSIONS ON A BABY/CHILD LESS THAN ONE YEAR OLD?**



1. Place three fingers of your hand on the center of the baby's/child's chest on its breastbone (sternum).
2. Remove the bottom finger of the three fingers and compress the chest with the two remaining fingers (middle and index finger) up to one third of the depth from the chest of the baby/child.

❗ Do not use the base or palm of your hand. Only use one hand.

3. Repeat these compressions 30 times at a rate of 100-120 per minute.

Release the pressure completely between compressions without removing your fingers from the chest.

Always make sure the chest rises before pressing down again.

#### **A.5.3.4 CPR: HOW TO GIVE RESCUE BREATHS ON A BABY/CHILD LESS THAN ONE YEAR OLD?**



1. Move the baby's/child head backwards and lift its chin slightly.
2. Cover the baby's/child's nose and mouth with your mouth and gently puff into his lungs only until you see his chest rise, pausing between rescue breaths to let the air flow back out.

❗ Remember that a baby's lungs are much smaller than yours, so it takes much less than a full breath to fill them.

3. Check if the baby's/child's chest rises.

If the chest does not rise, take following steps:

- a. Check if anything is in the baby's/child's mouth.

If so, remove any visible items that may block the airway.

- b. Check that the head is well tilted and the chin is lifted properly.

In any case: make no more than two attempts to blow air into the baby/child.

4. Start another series of 30 chest compressions prior trying to puff air into the baby's/child's mouth again.
5. Do not interrupt the resuscitation until:
  - the child starts to wake up, moves, opens his eyes and breathes normally;
  - help (trained in CPR) arrives and takes over; or
  - the area becomes unsafe for you to continue.

#### **A.5.3.5 HYGIENE**

Always wash your hands after taking care of a person. Use soap and water to wash your hands. If no soap is available, you can use ash to wash your hands. Alcohol-based sanitizers can also be used, if available.

#### **A.5.4 WHEN TO REFER TO A HEALTHCARE FACILITY?**



Always – urgently: Any person that has stopped breathing or needed CPR should always be transported to the nearest healthcare facility as quickly as possible continuing CPR.

## **A.6 RECOVERY POSITION**

The recovery position refers to a lateral prone position of the body, in to which an unconscious but breathing normally casualty can be placed as part of the first aid treatment.

In an unconscious person, the muscles are relaxed. This causes the tongue to obstruct the airway. This risk can be eliminated by carefully tilting the head back and lifting the chin. The recovery position should be used for unconscious casualties who are breathing.

The position of the casualty's arms and legs provide the necessary stability to keep the body in a safe and comfortable position.

Unblocking the breathing passage takes priority over concerns about a potential spinal injury. Unless you can clearly see that the person is breathing normally, an unconscious person must be turned onto his back to unblock the breathing passage and to check breathing.

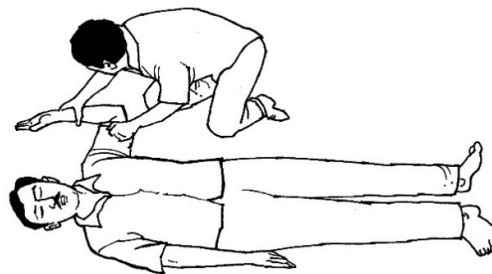
### **A.6.1 HOW TO PUT A PERSON INTO THE RECOVERY POSITION?**

#### **A.6.1.1 SAFETY FIRST AND CALL FOR HELP**

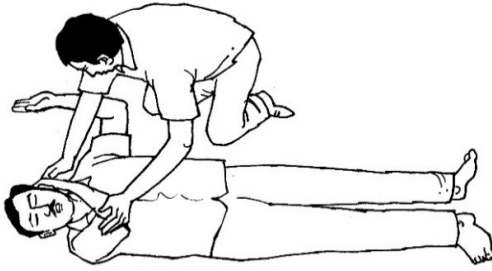
1. Make sure there is no danger to you, the person who needs help and bystanders before giving help.
2. The victim needs urgent help. If not yet done, shout or call for help if you are alone but do not leave the person unattended. Ask a bystander to seek help or to arrange urgent transport to the nearest healthcare facility. Tell him to come back to you to confirm that help has been secured.

#### **A.6.1.2 HOW TO PUT A PERSON INTO THE RECOVERY POSITION**

3. Put the person on the floor if he is not there already.
4. Remove the person's spectacles if necessary.
5. Kneel down by the side of the casualty.
6. Make sure both of his legs are outstretched.
7. Place the nearest arm (the one on the side you are kneeling next to) at right angles to his body.
8. Bend the forearm upwards with palm facing up.

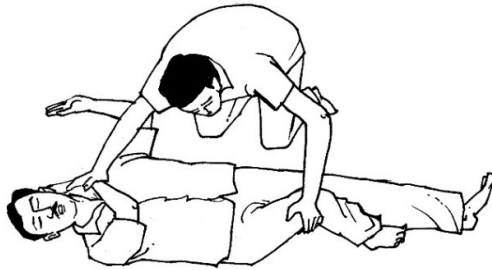


9. Lay the person's other arm across his chest.



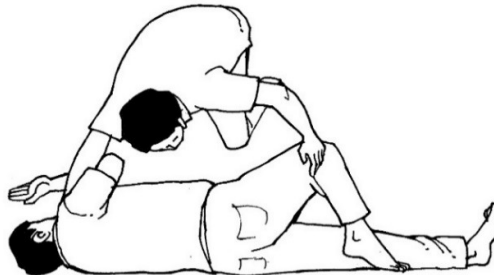
10. Hold the back of this hand against his cheek on the side at which you are kneeling.

11. Keep that hand in that position.



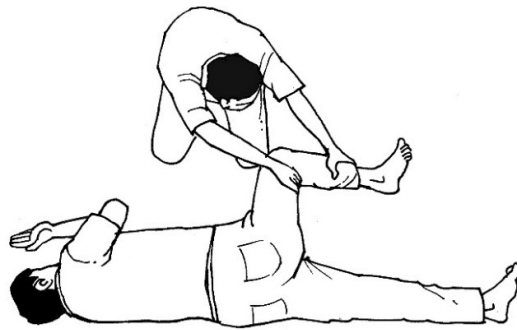
12. With your other free hand, grasp the leg on the other side of the person's body under the knee.

13. Raise that leg, but leave the person's foot on the ground.



14. Pull the raised leg towards you.

15. In the meantime, keep the back of the person's hand held against his cheek. Roll the person towards you so he turns on his side.

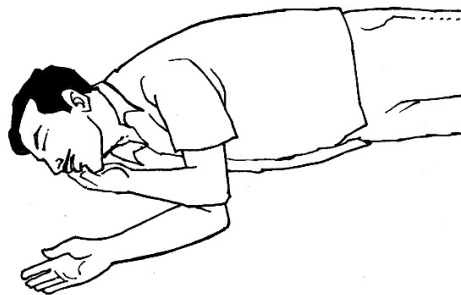


pull leg figure

16. Position the person's upper leg in such a way that his hip and knee are at right angles.
17. The person is now in a turned position and will not turn on his back.



18. Tilt the head of the person backwards to keep the airway open.
19. Make sure the mouth is angled towards the ground. This will prevent the risk of choking on blood or vomit.



20. Adjust the hand under the cheek if necessary so that the head remains tilted backwards and the mouth remains at a downward angle.
- ① A casualty lying position is commonly referred to in the 'recovery position'
21. Do not leave a casualty alone and continue observing his condition and monitoring his breathing. If the person stops breathing, start resuscitation (see resuscitation).

SUMMARY:

The casualty is ...	Procedure
Conscious and breathing normally	Give appropriate first aid.
Unconscious, and breathing normally	Put the casualty in recovery position.
Unconscious and not breathing or not breathing normally	Start CPR.

## A.7 TOP TO TOE ASSESSMENT

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The 'history of the case' is the story of the accident, i.e. how the accident actually occurred. The casualty will give the history if conscious. If he is unconscious, someone who saw the accident will help. The surroundings will add to the information, like an abandoned vehicle or a damaged area near the place and its condition.

*Symptoms* are *what the casualty tells* the first aider. Examples of symptoms the casualty can report about are:

- feeling pain,
- feeling cold or heat,
- getting thirsty,
- feeling nauseous,
- feeling weak,
- feeling dizzy,
- feeling fainting,
- any loss of normal movement,
- any loss of sensation,
- temporary loss of consciousness,
- loss of memory,
- having felt the sensation of breaking a bone,
- etc.

These symptoms described by the casualty can help to lead the first aider to the region of injury.

*Signs* are what the first aider feels and finds out by himself.

Examples of these signs are the observed:

- breathing,
- bleeding,
- colour or paleness,
- swelling of injured parts,
- deformities of limbs,
- other observations of any kind.

Training helps in making these observations accurately.



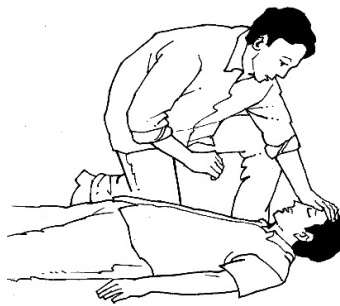
### A.7.1 THE INITIAL TOP TO TOE ASSESSMENT

A general assessment can be carried out to assess any imminent threats to life and whether the casualty is conscious or unconscious. It should be executed quickly.

❗ Resuscitation, the stopping of bleedings and the treatment of any life- threatening issues have priority. If the condition of the casualty worsens during the examination, the necessary first aid measures should be taken immediately.

❗ During assessment, movement should be as little as possible to avoid further injuries.

Assess from head toward feet and compare one side of the casualty's body with the other as this helps you to detect any swelling or irregularities that require first aid.



Check consciousness



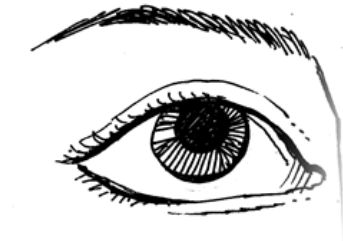
Check breathing



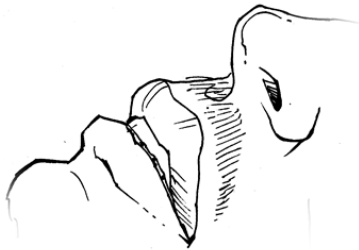
Check pulse



Check head injuries



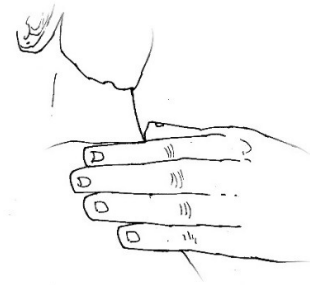
Check eyes



Check mouth



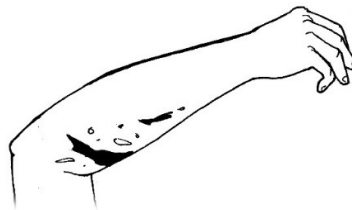
Check ears



Check neck



Check chest



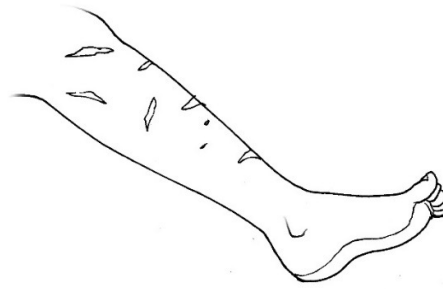
Check arms



Check abdomen



Check hips/groin



Check legs

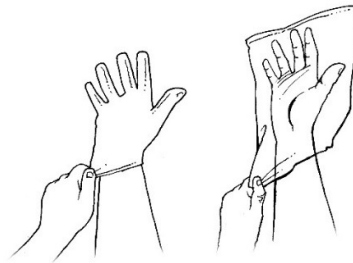
## A.8 HYGIENE AND HAND WASHING

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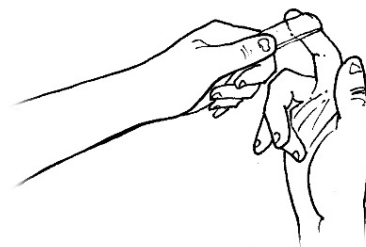
### A.8.1 GENERAL HYGIENE NOTES

When dealing with ill or injured persons it is important to keep the risk of infection between yourself and the sick or injured person to a minimum:

- If possible, wash your hands with soap and water (40-60 seconds) before and definitely after you take care of an ill or injured person. Alternatively, you can also use ash to wash your hands. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers can also be used, if the hands are not visibly soiled (20-30 seconds).
- Avoid direct contact with blood or body fluids.
- Use gloves if there is blood or other body fluids like urine or vomit. You can also use a clean plastic bag to cover the hands.



- If no gloves or plastic bags are available you can:
  - Instruct the sick or injured person as to what he can do himself.
  - Try to avoid contact with blood or body fluids as much as possible when you give first aid.
  - You may decide not to give help if you cannot ensure avoiding contact with blood or body fluids.
- It is good to have gloves in your first aid kit.



- Use a sticking plaster, bandage or clean cloth to protect any cuts, grazes, or wounds you may have yourself. Infections may spread through breaks in your skin.
- Wear shoes to protect your feet from infection.
- Use lots of clean water to rinse out any blood or other body fluid that splashes into your eyes or mouth, straight away.

- Dispose of used materials appropriately and clean up any blood spills because it can cause infection to others.
- Be very careful with sharp objects. They should be disposed of with care (e.g. in a box) so that they form no danger to others.
- Dispose of any soiled bandages carefully. Put them in a plastic bag or bin and then burn or bury them.
- Be careful not to use dirty or contaminated materials to treat ill or injured persons as these can pass on diseases from one person to another.
- You can sterilize material by placing it for 10 minutes in boiling water or running it through a flame a few times.
- Use clean drinking water or boiled and cooled water if a person needs to drink.

### A.8.2 TECHNIQUE OF HAND WASHING



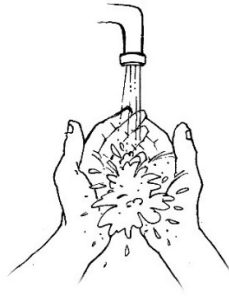
1. Wet your hands under running water.



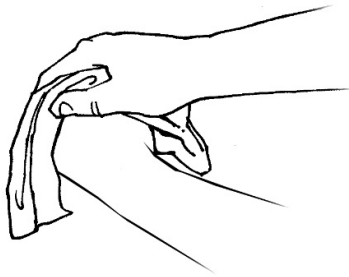
2. Use soap to cover all hand surfaces. If you have liquid soap, this is best. Alternatively you can also use ash that is no longer hot to wash your hands.



3. Rub your hands firmly together (40-60 seconds) and wash your hands thoroughly. Make sure the soap touches all the parts of your hands. Do not forget the tips of your fingers, your thumbs and the skin between your fingers.



4. Rinse your hands well. Use plenty of water.



5. Dry your hands.

WHO pictures

## A.9 FIRST AID OVERVIEW FLOW CHART

