



First Aid Handout

Emergency Services

During an incident it is normally essential that someone dials 999 for an ambulance. In a 4 person incident this will normally be the job of the captain or be delegated to another team member.

If you call 999 you should tell the operator:

Your name and that you are trained in first aid.
The exact location of the incident, road name, building or number.
The type of incident and seriousness i.e. RTA, drowning.
The number, sex and approximate ages of the casualties, anything you know about their condition and medical history.
Details of any hazards, i.e. fire, gas leak, chemical leak.

First Aid Kits

A basic first aid kit (like the one used for Lifesaving Nationals) should contain the following:

- Pair of latex gloves x4
- Scissors
- Pen
- Pocket Mask
- Paper Bag
- Eye Pad Bandage x2
- Medium dressing with pad x1
- Large dressing with pad x2
- Triangular Bandage x3

Some additional items may also be present at other competitions:

Space Blankets – can be used for the aftercare of water casualties, shock treatment, hypothermia.

Sweets/energy drinks – can be given to diabetics.

Plasters – can be given out for minor injuries, must be applied by the casualty.

Heart and Circulation problems

Shock

Defined as the failure of the circulatory system resulting in inadequate supply of blood to vital organs (heart and brain). Shock can be fatal if left untreated.

Symptoms – rapid pulse, pale clammy skin, weakness and dizziness, grey colour, nausea and vomiting, rapid shallow breathing, eventual unconsciousness and heart failure.

Treatment – Treat any obvious cause of shock (i.e. bleeding, burns,) lay the casualty down and keep warm with a coat/blanket, raise legs, reassure, loosen any tight clothing, call for an ambulance, monitor vital signs. Be prepared to do rescue breathing or CPR.

Angina

Constriction of the chest when the coronary arteries, which supply the heart muscles with blood, become narrowed.

Symptoms – sharp pain in the chest, breathlessness, weakness, anxiety. Can lead to a heart attack.

Treatment – Help the casualty to sit down and let them administer medication (tablets or spray) themselves. Reassure, attack should end within a few minutes if not call for an ambulance.

Fainting

Brief loss of consciousness caused by temporary reduction of flow of blood to the brain.

Symptoms – casualty falls to the floor, slow pulse, pale, cold, sweaty skin.

Treatment – If they feel faint advise them to lie down, raise legs to improve blood flow. Reassure and ensure they have fresh air. If they do fall, do an all over body check for injuries and turn over if necessary. Then do normal ABC checks. If they remain unconscious place in recovery position.

Bleeding

Types of bleeding wounds:

Incised wounds

A clean cut caused by a sharp object (e.g. a knife or razor) leading to profuse bleeding and tendon or nerve damage.

Abrasions (graze)

Superficial wound in which the top layer of skin is scraped off. Caused by a sliding fall or friction burn. May contain embedded foreign particles leading to infection.

Contusion (Bruise)

Rupture of capillaries beneath the skin causing blood to leak into the tissues.



Treatment – most cuts and grazes can be controlled by pressure and elevation. Put on plastic gloves, raise the cut above the heart, clean with antiseptic wipes if you have them. Then apply a dressing and bandage (or plaster) and get the casualty to apply pressure. If bleeding continues through the dressing DO NOT REMOVE IT you may destroy blood clots already forming, apply another dressing or bandage.

Foreign Objects

Small objects e.g. glass or grit:

If you cannot remove them place a dressing or gauze lightly over the wound and then apply enough padding so you can bandage over it without directly pressing on the wound.

Large or embedded objects e.g. knives:

Do not attempt to remove these objects as you may aggravate bleeding and destroy blood clots already forming. Bandage around them.

Severe Bleeding

Symptoms – distress, shock, loss of consciousness, heart failure.

Treatment - Help the casualty to lie down, apply direct pressure to the wound with your/casualties fingers over a sterile non-fluffy dressing. Secure the dressing with a bandage tightly and continue to apply pressure. If you suspect shock raise the legs.

Head injuries

Scalp wounds will bleed profusely and may be part of an underlying more serious injury such as a skull fracture.

Treatment – Help the casualty to lie down, put on gloves, apply pressure the wound with a pad. Secure the pad in place with a bandage.

Eye Wound

The eye can be bruised or cut by a direct blow or sharp objects.

Symptoms – Intense pain and spasm of the eyelids, visible wound or bloodshot appearance, partial or total loss of vision, leakage of blood or clear fluid from the wound.

Treatment – Do not touch or attempt to remove foreign objects from the eye. Help the casualty to lie down and keep both eyes still. Ask the casualty to hold a sterile bandage or clean non-fluffy pad over the affected eye, if it will take time to get help, secure with a bandage. Keep the head supported.

Nosebleed

Bleeding occurs when tiny blood vessels inside the nose are ruptured either by a blow or as a result of picking, sneezing or repeatedly blowing the nose.



Treatment – Ask the casualty to sit down and advise them to tip their head forward to allow the blood to drain from the nostrils, ask them to breathe through their mouth and pinch the soft part of the nose. Advise the casualty not to speak, swallow, cough, sniff or spit because they may disturb blood clots. Do not allow the head to tip back as this may induce vomiting.

Burns

Treatment – Douse the area with cold water for at least 10 minutes. Continue to cool the area until the pain is relieved. Put on gloves, carefully remove burned clothing unless it is sticking to the skin. Cover with a sterile dressing and secure.

Fractures

Closed

Skin above the fracture is intact but bones may be displaced and damage internal tissue.

Symptoms – Deformity, swelling, bruising, pain and difficulty in moving the area, shock.

Treatment – Advise the casualty to keep still. If an arm injury, advise them to sit down and support with a sling in a position that is comfortable for the casualty. If a leg injury, advise them to lie down and bandage the injured leg to the uninjured leg.

Open

One end of the broken bone has pierced the skin surface

Symptoms – As above and also bleeding and a protruding bone.

Treatment – As above. Put on gloves and apply pressure with a pad or dressing around the bone. Secure with a bandage.