

# FIRST AID GUIDE

## FIRST AID GUIDE

St John Ambulance Australia, Australian First Aid

IN AN EMERGENCY, KEEP CALM, TAKE CONTROL AND FOLLOW THESE STEPS



### DRSABCD ACTION PLAN

Danger  
Response  
Send for help  
Airway  
Breathing  
CPR  
Defibrillation



#### DANGER

Ensure the area is safe for yourself, others and the patient

#### RESPONSE

Check for response - ask name - squeeze shoulders  
No response - Send for help  
Response - Make comfortable - Monitor response

#### SEND for help

Call triple zero (000) for an ambulance or ask another person to make the call

#### AIRWAY

Open airway by tilting head back with chin lift - Open mouth  
Foreign material present - Place in recovery position - Clear airway with fingers  
No foreign material - Leave on back

#### BREATHING

Check for breathing - look, listen, feel  
Not normal breathing - Start CPR  
Normal breathing - Place in recovery position - Monitor breathing



#### CPR

Start CPR - 30 chest compressions : 2 breaths  
Continue CPR until help arrives or patient recovers

#### DEFIBRILLATION

Apply defibrillator if available/follow voice prompts

### EYE INJURY

Casualties with eye injuries should be referred to medical aid. If the eye has received a severe blow, or is bleeding:

- Place the casualty on their back with head and shoulders slightly raised, keeping the head still.
- Lightly cover injured eye.
- Ask casualty not to move eyes.
- Seek medical aid.

Any chemical in the eye may be very painful. Gently flush the eye with cold flowing water for at least 20 minutes and seek medical aid.

Use a clean handkerchief moistened with cold water to remove small foreign bodies from the inside of eyelids or from the white of the eye.

Do not attempt to remove:

- Foreign bodies from the coloured part of the eye.
- Embedded foreign bodies.



### POISONS

If smoke or gas present call Fire Brigade.

If casualty is **unconscious** call 000 for ambulance. Monitor signs of life (breathing, movement, response).

If casualty is **conscious** try to determine poison taken. Call Poisons Information Centre: 131 126

DO NOT induce vomiting.

DO NOT give anything by mouth.

Seek medical aid urgently.

FOR POISONS INFORMATION PHONE:

NATIONAL NUMBER  
**13 11 26**

### HEAD INJURY

Casualties with head injuries require medical aid, particularly if they have been unconscious, even if only for a short time.

### SPINAL INJURY

DO NOT move the casualty unless in danger. If movement is necessary, the head and neck must be adequately supported. Seek medical aid urgently.

### BLEEDING



As serious bleeding may be life-threatening, it is essential to act immediately.

Apply direct pressure to the wound and surrounding skin, using a sterile dressing and bulky pad if available. DO NOT allow the casualty to bleed to death while waiting for sterile dressings or pads. Improvise with a clean folded cloth (e.g. a handkerchief or tea towel). Retain the dressing and pad in position with a firm bandage.

Elevate the affected part where possible.

Watch for and manage shock and unconsciousness.

Call medical aid urgently.

**MINOR WOUNDS** should be cleansed using soap and water or a sterile saline solution. Apply a clean dressing (preferably sterile and non-adherent) to the wound. Seek medical aid, particularly if the wound is deep and dirty.

Do not remove objects which are impaled in the wound. Pad around the wound and the object, and seek medical aid.

### IN AN EMERGENCY CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) for an ambulance, fire or police. Mobile phones: dial 112

The St John DRSABCD Action Plan is a vital aid to the first aider in assessing whether the patient has any life-threatening conditions and if any immediate first aid is necessary. St John First Aid Protocols are for the Australian market only. All care has been taken in preparing the information but St John takes no responsibility for its use by other parties or individuals. St John encourages first aid training as the information contained here is NOT a substitute for first aid training. For more information on St John first aid training and kits visit <http://www.stjohn.org.au/> or call 1300 360 455.

### BITES AND STINGS



Snake, funnel web spider, blue ring octopus

Symptoms and signs:

- History of bite or sting. Snake bite - puncture wounds may be seen.
- Heart or breathing action may be affected minutes to hours after the bite or sting.

Management

Rest and reassure the casualty. Apply a broad, firm bandage from the fingers or toes up to the armpit or groin, covering as much of the limb as possible. Immobilise the limb with a splint. If breathing fails, carry out resuscitation procedures as necessary. Seek medical aid urgently.

Red back spider bites

DO NOT use a pressure immobilisation bandage. Reassure the casualty, apply a cold compress and seek medical aid immediately.

Bee stings

NEVER pull out the sting. Scrape the sting sideways with a finger nail or the side of a knife blade. Apply a cold compress to ease the pain. If the casualty is allergic to bee stings, remove the sting, bandage as for snake bite and seek medical aid urgently.

Box jellyfish stings

Provide resuscitation if necessary. Flood the entire stung area with vinegar for at least 30 seconds. DO NOT wash with water. If vinegar is not available, flick off any remnants of the tentacles with a stick. Call 000 for an ambulance. Remain with the casualty if possible, until medical aid arrives.

## SPRAINS AND STRAINS

- Follow **RICE**.
- **R**est the casualty and the injured part.
- Apply an **I**cepack (cold compress) wrapped in a wet cloth for 15 minutes every 2 hours for 24 hours, then for 15 minutes every 4 hours for 24 hours.
- Apply a **C**ompression bandage firmly to extend well beyond the injury.
- **E**levate the injured part.
- **S**eek medical aid.



## SUNBURN

Sunburn is preventable. Reduce distress by:

- Cold showers.
- Applying cool, moist compresses to the area.
- Resting casually in a cool place.
- Giving fluids.

Young babies and those with severe blistering require medical aid.

## BURNS

Remove **DANGER** or casualty. Smother burning clothing with a blanket or roll casualty on the ground to smother flames. When possible, remove any hot clothing quickly.

**COOL** the injured area under cold, gently running water for at least 20 minutes.

**COVER** the injured area with a sterile or clean non-adherent dressing.

**Do not apply any lotions, ointments or oily dressings. Do not prick blisters.**

**Seek medical aid.**



## FIRST AID TRAINING

This information does not replace first aid training. First aid training and kits are available from St John Ambulance Australia in all States & Territories. For more information visit: [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au)

**LEARN FIRST AID WITH ST JOHN, CALL:  
1300 360 455**

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## DIVING EMERGENCY SERVICE

**Phone 1800 088 200**

- State "This is a Diving Emergency".
- Provide details of incident, depth, time, location and symptoms.
- Wait for advice and directions.
- Act on advice and directions.