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Breathing and Electric Shock

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Drowning

Drowning is a major cause of accidental death in the United States. Victims who die of drowning can die within about 4 to 6 minutes of the accident because they have stopped breathing.

1. Get the victim out of the water at once.

Use extreme caution to avoid direct contact with the victim since a panicked victim may drown the rescuer as well.

If the victim is conscious, push a floating object to him/her or let the victim grasp a long branch, pole or object.



If the victim is unconscious, take a flotation device with you if possible and approach the victim with caution. Once ashore or on the deck of a pool, the victim should be placed on his/her back.

2. If the victim is not breathing, start mouth to mouth rescue breathing immediately. (See Rescue Breathing section.)



Keep giving rescue breathing until the victim can breathe unassisted. That can take an hour or two. Pace yourself. Keep calm. Remember: Even when the victim is breathing unassisted, he or she may be in need of medical attention. Have someone else go for help. Do not leave the victim alone under any circumstances...not even to call for help!

3. If the victim is breathing without assistance, even though coughing and sputtering, he or she will get rid of the remaining water. You need only stand by to see that recovery continues, but have someone else send for professional help.

Electric Shock

(Electrocution) Normal electrical current can be deadly, and it is all around us.

1. Do not touch a person who has been in contact with electrical current until you are certain that the electricity has been turned off. Shut off the power at the plug, circuit breaker or fuse box.

2. If the victim is in contact with a wire or a downed power line, use a dry stick to move it away.

3. Check for breathing—if the victim's breathing is weak or has stopped:

A. Give Rescue Breathing immediately. (See Rescue Breathing section.)



4. Call for emergency help. While you wait for help to arrive:

A. Keep the victim warm (covered with a blanket, coat, jacket, etc.).
B. Give the victim nothing to drink or eat, until he or she is seen by a doctor.



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Heart Attack and Bleeding

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Heart Attack

Heart attack is the number one killer of adults over the age of 38. Many heart attack victims die needlessly because they do not get help in time.

1. Warning signs include:

A. Severe squeezing pains in the chest.
B. Pain that radiates from the chest into either the arm, the neck or jaw.
C. Sweating and weakness, nausea or vomiting.
D. Pain that extends across the shoulders to the back.

2. If the victim is experiencing any of these sensations take no chances. Call for emergency help at once.

3. Two critical life threatening things happen to the victim of a heart attack:

A. Breathing slows down or stops.
B. The heart may slow down or stop pumping blood.

4. If the victim is not breathing:

A. Give rescue breathing immediately and have someone else call for emergency help.



5. If you cannot detect a heart beat by taking a pulse at the Carotid Artery:

(The Carotid Artery can be felt on either side of the neck slightly below and forward of the base of the jaw.)



- A. "CPR", Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation should be given to the victim along with Rescue Breathing only by a person properly trained and certified.

Learn CPR. CPR is a way of forcing the heart to continue pumping blood (carrying oxygen) through the lungs and out to the rest of the body where it is needed if life is to continue. CPR is too complicated to be taught from the printed pages alone. Courses are offered by The American Heart Association and The American Red Cross. Many medical authorities agree that everyone thirteen years of age and older should learn both CPR and Rescue Breathing.

Bleeding

Check to see if the victim is wearing a Medic Alert or similar bracelet, necklace, etc. It describes emergency medical requirements.

The best way to control bleeding is with direct pressure over the site of the wound.

- A. Use a pad of sterile gauze, if one is available.
B. A sanitary napkin, a clean handkerchief, or even your bare hand, if necessary, will do.
C. Apply firm, steady direct pressure for 5 to 15 minutes. Most bleeding will stop within a few minutes.



- D. If bleeding is from a foot, hand, leg or arm use gravity to help slow the flow of blood. Elevate the limb so that it is higher off the ground than the victim's heart.
E. Severe nose bleeding can often be controlled by direct pressure such as by pinching the nose with the fingers. Apply pressure 10 minutes without interruption.

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