

# Propel HR NEWSLETTER

SAFETY

March 2002

## FIRST AID

Employers should always be mindful that first aid is always a critically important piece of an overall safety and health program. Whether your facility is an industrial plant or a service business, employees can encounter a wide variety of injuries including electrical shock, bleeding, broken bones, heart attacks, and eye injuries, among many others.

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In the event of any serious injury or illness, encourage your employees to take the following steps:

- **Call for medical help immediately.** Explain the kind of injury and the location of the victim.
- **Stay calm, yet act fast.** Consult emergency numbers (which should be posted at all phones) for your medical department, hospital, paramedics, and employees with first aid training.
- **Bring help to the victim.** Do not bring the victim to the help.
- **Do not move the an injured person** unless it is necessary to save his or her life.
- **Know where first-aid kits are kept.**
- **Check to see if the victim is breathing.**
- **If you are unsure of what to do,** make the call for help and wait with the injured individual.

### FIRST-AID KITS

The American Red Cross suggests the following contents be included in your first-aid kit:

- |                            |                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ◆ Adhesive strips          | ◆ Cold packs                |
| ◆ Adhesive tape            | ◆ Scissors                  |
| ◆ Alcohol wound wipes      | ◆ Tweezers                  |
| ◆ Ammonia inhalants        | ◆ Sterile cotton            |
| ◆ Aspirin                  | ◆ 4 sizes of gauze bandages |
| ◆ Nonaspirin pain reliever | ◆ Sting relief wipes        |
| ◆ Antacids                 | ◆ Eye irrigation solution   |
| ◆ Laxatives                |                             |
| ◆ Cold packs               |                             |
| ◆ Burn cream               |                             |

✦ It is very important that every employee is informed of where the first-aid kit is kept. It should be *easily accessible*.

✦ It is critical to maintain a list of employee *medication currently being taken as well as any allergies*.

✦ Employers should maintain a *first-aid log* to ensure that every use of the first-aid kit is noted including: date, time, person receiving treatment, person giving treatment, what injury or symptom was treated, what treatment was given, and first-aid materials used.

# SAFETY PROCEDURES

Each type of emergency has its own first-aid procedure. Among the situations employees might commonly encounter include:

1. **BLEEDING.** If someone is bleeding heavily, stop the flow until medical help arrives by pushing on the wound with a cloth or your hand. For deeper cuts, elevate the wound while you apply pressure.
2. **BROKEN BONES.** Do not move someone who may have broken bones unless it is absolutely necessary. Keep the person still and wait for the experts to arrive.
3. **EYE INJURIES.** Immediate treatment is important. If chemicals were splashed in the eye, flush with water for at least 15 minutes. Then close the eyes, cover them with a clean cloth, and get medical help. If something is stuck in the eye, keep the person calm until help arrives.
4. **ELECTRICAL SHOCK.** Do not touch a person in contact with a live electrical current. Turn off the main electric switch with a fuse, or get an electrician to do it if possible. If you must move the person from a live wire, stand on something dry and use a dry stick or board to push the person off the wire. NEVER use anything metal, wet, or damp! After the person is removed from the electricity, check for heartbeat and breathing. If necessary, and if you are able, administer artificial respiration or CPR.
5. **CHOKING.** Ask the person loudly, "Are you choking?" If he or she cannot respond, try the Heimlich Maneuver as follows:  
Stand behind the victim with your arms around his or her waist. Make a fist with one hand and place it, thumb side in, against the victim's stomach between the navel and the ribs. Grab your fist with your other hand. Pull in and up sharply and repeat as necessary. If that does not work and the person is unconscious, use your index and middle fingers to try to remove the object from the throat. Or place the person on his or her back and push in and up sharply on the abdomen below the rib cage. Do not stop until the object is dislodged or medical help arrives.
6. **HEART ATTACK.** Although symptoms are not always obvious, do the following if you believe someone is having a heart attack:
  - Place him or her in a comfortable reclining or sitting position.
  - Loosen tight clothing at the waist and neck.
  - Give oxygen if you have been trained to do so.
  - Ask if the person has medication for the problem that you can give.
  - Keep the person still until help arrives.
  - If the heart stops and you have been trained in CPR, use it, or use a defibrillator if one is available. Otherwise wait for help.

**'Good Samaritan' Protection:** In South Carolina, no individual who administers emergency care in good faith at the scene of an accident or emergency is liable for the consequences of acts or omissions they may or may not have performed in providing such emergency care; there is an exception if these acts or omissions amount to gross negligence or willful misconduct.

First aid can save a life. *Propel HR* can assist you in providing first aid training for you and your employees. For those individuals that have been trained, refresher courses will enable each of them to remain a vital resource if an accident does occur in your workplace.

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If you would like more information regarding First Aid training, please contact Propel HR at (864) 271-7611 or (800) 446-6597.