

Basic First Aid

Broken bones

- ◆ While waiting for medical help, stop any bleeding by applying pressure to the wound with a clean cloth, immobilize the injured area, apply ice packs to limit swelling, and treat for shock, if necessary, by having the person lie down with his or her head slightly lower than the trunk and, if possible, the legs elevated.

Cuts, scrapes, and punctures

- ◆ Wash the wound with soap and water.
- ◆ Apply a bandage to the wound.
- ◆ If the bleeding doesn't stop, put pressure on the wound with the palm of your hand and a clean cloth. Put on a clean bandage after the bleeding has stopped.

Heat

- ◆ Exposure to excessive heat can cause heat exhaustion, cramps, and, most serious, heat stroke.
- ◆ Symptoms of heat stroke are hot, dry skin, often with red spots; a body temperature of 105 degrees F or higher; confusion and irritability; and chills. Without medical attention the victim may become delirious, unconscious, or even die. Until medical help arrives, move the person to a cool area, soak his or her clothes with water, and fan the person vigorously to cool the body.
- ◆ Symptoms of heat exhaustion are weakness, fatigue, giddiness, nausea, or headache. The skin is clammy and moist. The body temperature may be only slightly higher than

normal. Have the victim rest in a cool place and drink plenty of lightly salted liquids.

- ◆ When there is no power or air conditioning, prevent heat problems by doing strenuous work during the cooler parts of the day and drinking plenty of liquids.

Stings and bites

- ◆ Wash the wound with soap and water.
- ◆ If possible, identify the animal or insect involved.
- ◆ If the wound is severe or the animal has escaped, take the person to a doctor.
- ◆ Treat minor wounds with over-the-counter medications for stings and bites. Home remedies include ammonia, meat tenderizer, tea tree oil, camphor, and a 50:50 solution of bleach and water.

Choking

- ◆ Allow the person to cough. Don't pound on his or her back.
- ◆ If the person can't speak or breathe, stand behind him or her and make a fist with one hand. Place your fist just above the person's belly button. Your thumb should be toward the person's stomach.
- ◆ Reach around the person's body and grab your fist with your other hand. Make sure your elbows are pointed out.
- ◆ Quickly pull your arms in and up toward the person's head. This should dislodge the object blocking the airway.
- ◆ Repeat these steps until the person can breathe.

