

Drowning factsheet

Call for help: lifeguard and 999

If you are not trained in water rescue, do not enter the water.

If the person is awake and responsive, stay on land and reach out to the person through flotation devices, a lifebuoy, a rescue tube or other rescue equipment.

Treatment:

- Once on land or a boat, check if the person is responsive and breathing normally
- If unresponsive and not breathing, immediately give 5 rescue breaths, then begin standard CPR.
- If an AED device is available, dry the chest quickly and follow the device prompts to apply and use it.
- Continue CPR and AED use until the person shows signs of life or emergency assistance arrives, and they take over.

Heatstroke factsheet

Heatstroke is a condition caused by the body overheating. This usually happens because of exposure to high temperatures or physical activity in high temperatures for too long. Heat exhaustion does not usually need emergency medical help if you can cool down within 30 minutes. If it turns into heatstroke – it needs to be treated as an emergency.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion and heatstroke

Heat exhaustion:

- Tiredness
- Dizziness
- Headach
- Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting)
- Excessive sweating and skin becoming pal and clammy (may be difficult to see on brown and black skin)
- Cramps in the arms, legs or stomach
- A high temperature
- Being very thirsty
- Feeling irritable

Heatstroke:

- Hot skin that's not sweating and might look red (this can be harder to see on brown and black skin)
- Fast breathing or shortness of breath
- Confusion and lack of coordination
- Seizures
- Becoming unresponsive

Treatment and positioning for heatstroke:

- Call 999
- Move them to a cool place
- Remove all unnecessary clothing like a jacket or socks
- Get them to drink a sports drink or rehydration drink, or cool water
- Cool their skin – spray or sponge them with cool water and fan them. Cold packs, wrapped in a cloth and put under the armpits or on the neck are good too.
- Put the person in the recovery position if they become unresponsive while you're waiting for help.

Hypothermia factsheet

Hypothermia is a dangerous drop in body temperature below 35C. It is a medical emergency that needs to be treated in hospital.

If hypothermia is likely to occur (e.g. winter camp) implement a tailored prevention plan and consider additional training in Outdoor First Aid.

The common symptoms are:

- Shivering
- Cold, pale skin
- Slurred speech
- Clumsiness
- Confusion or unusual behaviour
- Drowsiness
- Slow breathing or pulse
- Unresponsive (if severe)

Treatment and positioning:

- Insulation: cover the person with blankets or clothing to minimise heat loss
- Wind protection: shield from wind
- Wet clothing removal: gently remove wet clothing and replace with dry garments
- Ground insulation: place insulating materials e.g. blankets between the individual and cold ground to prevent direct contact.

Stroke factsheet

A stroke is a medical emergency when the blood supply to the brain is disrupted. The majority of strokes are caused by a clot in a blood vessel that blocks the flow of blood to part of the brain. Some strokes are the result of a ruptured blood vessel that causes bleeding into the brain. It can affect things like speech and movement. Someone suffering from a stroke needs urgent medical help because it can be life-threatening.

A transient ischaemic attack, or TIA, is sometimes called a mini-stroke. It is similar to a full stroke but the symptoms last for a short while, improve and disappear.

We use a stroke assessment system – FAST – to decrease the time to recognition and definitive treatment for individuals with suspected acute stroke.

Face – look at their face and ask them to smile. Are they only able to smile on one side of the mouth? If yes, this is not normal.

Arms – ask them to raise both arms. Are they only able to lift one arm? If yes, this is not normal.

Speech – ask them to speak. Are they struggling to speak clearly. If yes, this is not normal.

Time – if the answer to any of these three questions is yes, then it is time to call 999 or 112 for medical help and say you think the person is having a stroke.

While waiting for help to arrive, keep them comfortable, supported, and reassure them.

Do not give them anything to eat or drink because it may be hard for them to swallow.

Keep monitoring their level of response until help arrives.

If they become unresponsive, prepare to treat them as an unresponsive casualty.

Other symptoms of a stroke

There are other signs that you or someone else is having a stroke. These include:

- weakness or numbness down 1 side of your body
- blurred vision or loss of sight in 1 or both eyes
- finding it difficult to speak or think of words
- confusion and memory loss
- feeling dizzy or falling over
- a severe headache
- feeling or being sick (nausea or vomiting)

Symptoms of a stroke can sometimes stop after a short time, so you may think you're okay. Even if this happens, get medical help straight away.

A stroke is more likely to happen if you're older, but it can happen at any age.

Chest pain factsheet

Chest pain is pain or discomfort in the area between the neck and the belly. Chest pain may be sharp or dull. It might come and go, or you might always feel the pain. The exact symptoms depend on the cause.

Many different things can cause chest pain. The most life-threatening causes involve the heart or lungs. So it is important to get medical help for an accurate diagnosis. A heart attack happens when blood flow to the blood vessels supplying blood and oxygen to your heart are blocked. It can be life-threatening and needs emergency treatment in hospital. Symptoms of a heart attack may include:

- Chest pain which feel like crushing or squeezing on your chest, and may spread to your arm , jaw or neck.
- Feeling lightheaded or dizzy
- Sweating
- Shortness of Breath
- Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting)
- An overwhelming sense of anxiety (similar to having a panic attack)
- Coughing or wheezing

Although the chest pain in heart attack is often severe, some people may only experience minor pain, similar to indigestion. In some cases, there may not be any chest pain at all, especially in women, older people, and those with diabetes.

Treatment and positioning:

- Call 999 or 112 form an ambulance.
- If the casualty is still responsive, sit them up, supporting them from behind with their knees slightly bent (the W position).
- Encourage and assist adults with cardiac sounding chest pain in self-administering 300mg aspirin (chewable or dissolvable) as soon as possible, whilst awaiting emergency assistance.
- Do not give to under 16s, those with severe allergy to aspirin, those with known stomach problems, or those with severe asthma.
- It is shown that when aspirin is given early, survival rates are better and there are no increased side-effects.
- If the casualty is known to have angina and has medication for it, they can be helped to use it as instructed on the prescription.
- Constantly monitor their level of response, circulation and breathing until help arrives.
- If they become unresponsive, put them in the recovery position if breathing normally.
- If not breathing normally – start CPR.