



North West  
Ambulance Service  
NHS Trust



# FIRST AID FACTS: WHAT TO DO WHEN...



Every year in the UK, thousands of people die or are seriously injured in incidents. You could help by giving first aid before the ambulance service arrives.

Before helping, check that you aren't putting yourself in any danger. Call 999 for an ambulance if the patient is seriously ill or injured and you think their life is in danger.



## ...THEY ARE BLEEDING HEAVILY!

If there is something stuck in the wound do not remove it. Press firmly on either side of the object and build up padding around it before bandaging to avoid putting pressure on the object.

If nothing is stuck, apply pressure to the wound using a clean pad or dressing; keep doing this until the bleeding stops.

If a body part, such as a finger, has been severed, place it in a plastic bag or wrap it in cling film and make sure it goes with the patient to hospital.



## ...THEY ARE CHOKING!

Ask the person to cough to try to clear the blockage.

If coughing doesn't work, stand behind the person, lean them forward and give up to five sharp blows between their shoulder blades with the heel of your hand.

If the blockage has not cleared, clench one fist and place it just above the person's belly button, place your other hand on top of your fist and pull sharply inwards and upwards, repeat this up to five times.

For babies under one, sit down and lay the baby face down along your thighs, supporting their head with your hand.

If the blockage has not cleared, lay the baby face up along the length of your thighs, find the breastbone and place two fingers in the middle. Push down on the chest up to five times.





## ...THEY ARE HAVING A STROKE!

A stroke is a serious illness that stops your brain working properly.

**FAST** or **face-arms-speech-time** is easy to remember and will help you recognise if someone is having a stroke.

**FACE** has their face fallen on one side? Can they smile?

**ARMS** can they raise both arms and keep them there?

**SPEECH** is their speech slurred?

**TIME** call 999 if you see any single one of these signs of a stroke.



## ...THEY HAVE CHEST PAIN!

A heart attack happens when the supply of blood to the heart is suddenly blocked. If someone is having a heart attack they may have severe chest pains.

It can feel like the chest is being pressed or squeezed by a heavy object, and pain can come from the chest to the jaw, neck, arms and back. The person may look pale and sweaty and feel sick or dizzy.

Sit the person down and make them comfortable. Don't give them anything to eat or drink.

If available, ask them to take a 300mg aspirin tablet to chew slowly (unless they're under 16 or allergic).

If they fall asleep and won't wake up, check they are breathing. If they are, put them in the recovery position. If they are not, do CPR.

This information can be made available in alternative formats, such as easy read or large print, and may be available in alternative languages upon request.

How to contact us:

0345 112 0 999

nwasenquiries@nwas.nhs.uk

[www.nwas.nhs.uk](http://www.nwas.nhs.uk)



## ...THEY WON'T WAKE UP!

### ANGER

Check it's safe for you to help.

### RESPONSE

Shake their shoulders and shout "are you alright?"

### SHOUT FOR HELP

If they don't respond, call 999 immediately. The ambulance service will tell you how to help by talking you through the next steps.

### AIRWAY

Lay the patient flat on their back. Gently tilt their head back to open the airway.

### BREATHING

Look for the chest going up and down, listen for strange noises and feel for any breath on your cheek.

If a person is unconscious but is breathing normally, you can put them in the recovery position.

### COMPRESSIONS

Start CPR if they are not breathing normally.



### HOW TO DO CPR

1. Kneel at the side of the patient.
2. Put the heel of your hand in the centre of the chest with the other hand on top\*.
3. Keep your arms straight and elbows locked.
4. Push down hard and fast - twice per second.
5. Let the chest come back up before you press down again.

\*Use one hand for a child and two fingers for a baby.





## HOW TO USE A DEFIBRILLATOR

A defibrillator is a machine that can give an electric shock to the heart to try and restore a normal rhythm.

They can be found in public places such as schools, train stations, shopping centres, airports and leisure centres - anyone can use them.

- 1 Open the defibrillator. If there is a power button, press it to turn the machine on.
- 2 Follow the instructions that you can see/hear.
- 3 A diagram will show you where to put the pads on the patient's bare chest.
- 4 The machine will analyse the heart rhythm.
- 5 It will decide if a shock is needed – **it's impossible to make a mistake.**

Continue with CPR. Keep going until the ambulance service arrives.



If the patient recovers and is breathing normally, you can put them in the recovery position.



## HOW TO PUT SOMEONE IN THE RECOVERY POSITION

- 1 With the person lying on their back, kneel on the floor at their side.
- 2 Place their arm nearest to you at a right angle to their body with their hand upwards, towards the head.
- 3 Tuck their other hand under the side of their head, so that the back of their hand is touching their cheek.
- 4 Bend the knee farthest from you to a right angle. Carefully roll the person onto their side by pulling on the bent knee.
- 5 The top arm should be supporting the head and the bottom arm will stop you rolling them too far.
- 6 Open their airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin, and check that nothing is blocking their airway.
- 7 Stay with the person and monitor their condition until help arrives.