



# First Aid Basics

A guide to help informal caregivers  
with essential first aid basics.





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This guidebook will help caregivers with the essential **knowledge and skills in first aid** information so they can provide their loved ones the best possible support. Whether you care for a child, an older adult, or someone with a disability, being able to administer any medical emergency that may occur is a crucial skill for every caregiver.

This guidebook aims to provide caregivers with a clear introduction to first aid, helping them respond promptly and appropriately in urgent situations. With easy-to-follow explanations and helpful illustrations, this guide aims to build knowledge and confidence to provide essential first aid whenever it is needed.

# First Aid Kits and Supplies

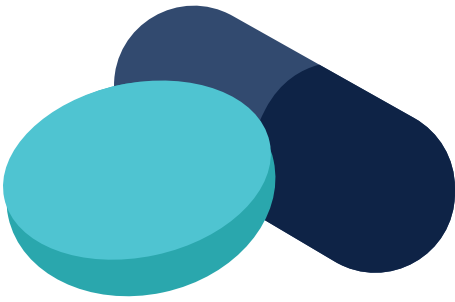
Every caregiver has to have a well-prepared first aid kit. A basic first aid kit should have:



- Adhesive bandages in different sizes
- Elastic bandages
- Sterile gauze pads
- Medical tape
- Antiseptic wipes or solution
- Disposable gloves
- Tweezers
- Scissors
- Instant cold packs
- Thermometer
- Pain-relieving medication
- Prescription medications (if applicable)

It is crucial to routinely inspect the first aid box to make sure there are no missing or expired materials. Alongside the first aid kit, caregivers should have ready access to emergency phone numbers and a list of the person's medical conditions and prescriptions.





# The Basics of First Aid

First aid refers to the initial care provided to someone who has been injured or becomes ill. It is the initial link in the survival chain and can significantly influence the outcome of an emergency.

Basic first aid involves assessing the situation, requesting assistance when needed, and providing care until medical personnel arrive.

Making sure you and the person you are caring for are safe is your priority in evaluating the issue. Next, check their condition, pulse, and level of consciousness to determine their status. You can then decide the next steps.





A key principle of first aid is knowing when to stop moving someone. Moving them could exacerbate any suspected neck or spinal injuries. Keeping them still until medical assistance arrives is important.

Along with assessing the situation, it is helpful to have a basic understanding of the human body and its activities. This includes being aware of the location of vital organs and how to recognize signs of common medical emergencies such as strokes or heart attacks.



# Common First Aid Procedures

Caregivers should be familiar with a variety of first aid techniques. These include:

## Choking

- Choking occurs when a person's airway is blocked. The Heimlich maneuver is used to remove the obstruction and restore breathing.



1

Stand behind the person with a stable stance.



2

Place a fist just above the navel, below the ribs.



3

Grasp with your other hand and give quick inward-upward thrusts.

4

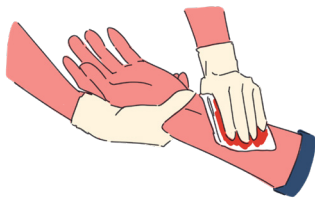
Repeat until the object is expelled or they become unresponsive.

5

If unconscious: lower to the ground, call emergency services, and start CPR.

## Bleeding

- In cases of severe bleeding, quick intervention is required. The bleeding can be slowed by raising the injured area applying pressure to the cut.



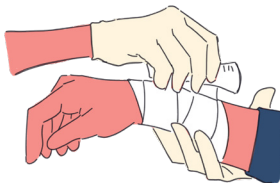
1

Apply Pressure: Use a clean cloth or bandage to press firmly on the wound.



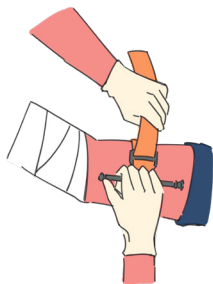
2

Elevate (if possible): Raise the injured area above heart level.



3

Secure Dressing: Wrap the wound to maintain pressure; do not remove soaked cloth. Add more layers if needed.



4

Stop the Bleeding: Continue pressure until bleeding slows or stops.

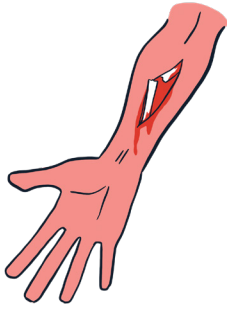


5

Seek Help: Get medical attention for severe or uncontrolled bleeding.

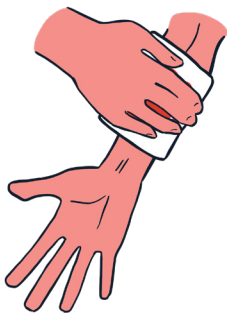
## Fractures

- A fracture is a broken bone. If you suspect one, keep the injured area still and seek medical help immediately.



1

Immobilize: Keep the injured area still; do not try to realign the bone.

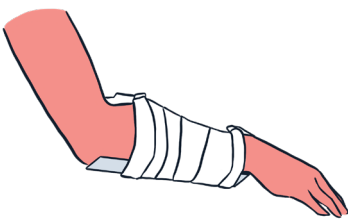


2

Control Bleeding: Cover any open wounds with a clean dressing.

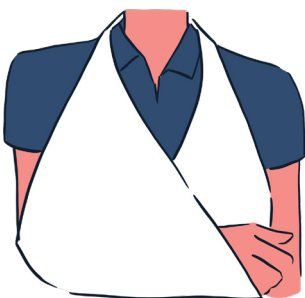
3

Support: Use a splint or padding to stabilize the limb.



4

Apply Cold Compress: Reduce swelling with a wrapped ice pack.



5

Seek Help: Get medical attention immediately; avoid moving the person unnecessarily.

## **Burns**

- Burns may result from heat, chemicals, electricity, and radiation. The severity of the burn will determine the proper first aid treatment, which may include cooling the affected area and covering it with a sterile dressing.

## **Cuts**

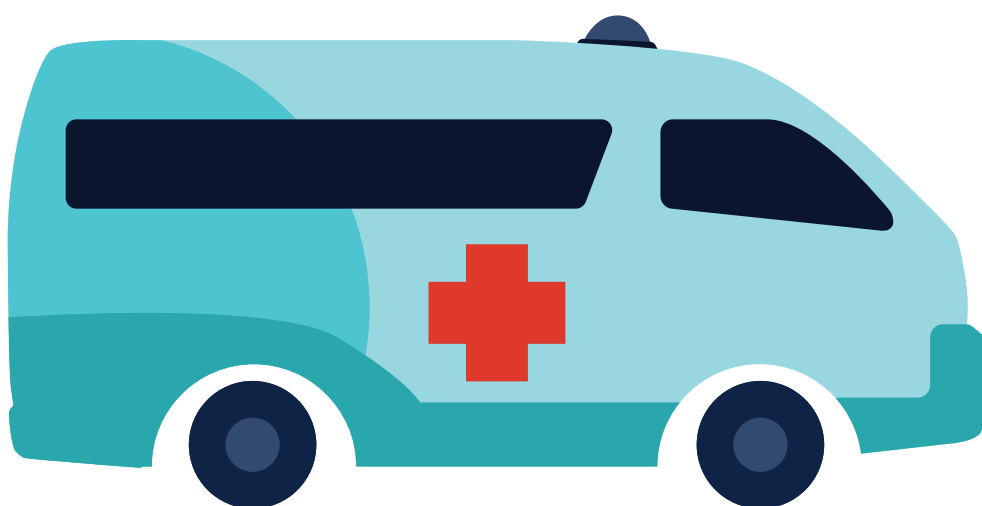
- Cuts can occur from sharp objects, accidents, or broken glass. The severity of the cut will determine the appropriate first aid, which may include cleaning the wound, applying pressure to stop bleeding, and covering it with a sterile dressing to prevent infection.

# Knowing When to Call an Ambulance

While it's crucial to have a basic understanding of first aid, it is equally important to recognize when professional medical assistance is needed. In general, you should call an ambulance if:

- The person is unresponsive or unconscious
- The person is having difficulty breathing or experiencing chest pain.
- The person has severe bleeding
- The person has a neck injury or a suspected spinal injury.
- The person has a suspected fracture
- The person is having a seizure

If unsure, it's always better to be cautious and call for help. It is preferable to have medical professionals arrive and determine that the issue is not dangerous than to delay calling for help and endanger the person's condition.





## Safety Tips for Carers

In addition to knowing basic first aid, carers must also take precautions to protect themselves. This includes:

- Making sure that the surroundings are free of hazards, like electrical cords or loose rugs
- Using safe lifting methods to avoid back injuries
- Putting on gloves and other protective equipment when handling bodily fluids or other potentially dangerous items
- Taking regular breaks and ensuring enough rest to avoid fatigue and burnout
- Seeking help from medical professionals when needed and reaching out to fellow caregivers

# How to Administer CPR

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is a vital emergency technique used in cases when a person's heart stops beating. To maintain oxygen delivery to the brain and other essential organs, rescue breaths and chest compressions are used. To perform CPR, do the following:



## 1. Call for help

■ If you are by yourself, contact emergency services before starting CPR.



## 2. Check for responsiveness

■ Tap their shoulder and shout their name to see if they react.



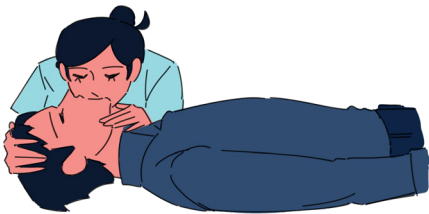
## 3. Check for breathing

■ Look, listen, and feel normal breathing for no more than 10 seconds.



#### 4. Start chest compressions

- Place the heel of one hand on the center of the person's chest and the other hand on top. Press down hard and fast at a rate of 100–120 compressions per minute, delivering 30 chest compressions.



#### 5. Give rescue breaths

- Tilt their head back and lift their chin. Pinch their nose closed and give 2 rescue breaths.



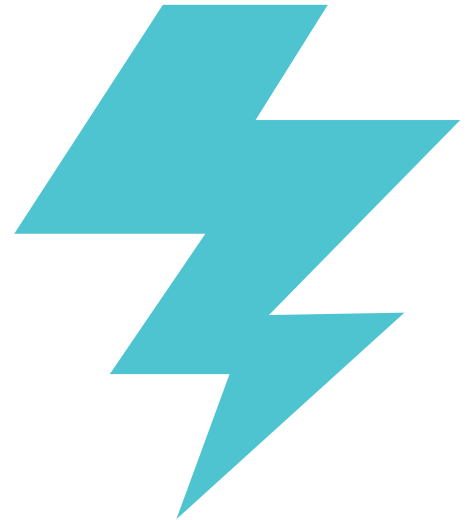
#### 6. Repeat

- Continue performing chest compressions and rescue breaths until medical assistance arrives or the person begins breathing again.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is a crucial emergency procedure that helps sustain a person's life until medical assistance arrives.

# Dealing with Burns and Cuts

Cuts and burns are frequent injuries that can happen in any home.



Use these procedures to treat burns:



1

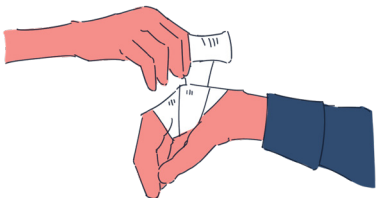
## Remove the source of the burn

Move the person away from the source of the burn if it was caused by chemicals or heat.

2

## Cool the affected area

Keep the burned area under cool running water for at least 10 minutes.



3

## Cover the burn

Cover it with a sterile, non-adhesive dressing.

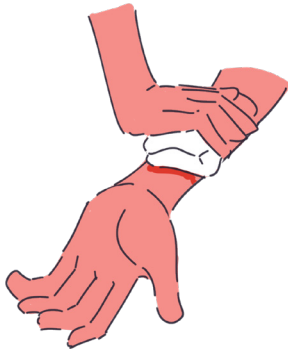


4

## Treat for pain

Over-the-counter pain relievers can help for the pain and to reduce inflammation.

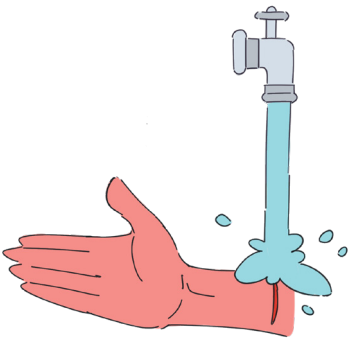
Use these procedures to treat cuts:



1

### Stop the bleeding

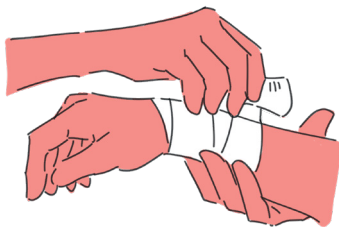
Use a clean towel or bandage to apply pressure to the wound.



2

### Clean the wound

With soap and water, clean the wound. Be careful not to scrub too hard.



3

### Cover the wound

Cover the wound with bandage or a sterile dressing.



4

### Monitor for signs of infection

Seek medical attention if you notice swelling, redness, or pus-filled.

# Carers and Mental Health First Aid

Beyond physical first aid, caregivers should also be knowledgeable about the symptoms of mental health issues and how to offer assistance. Mental health first aid focuses on giving someone who might be going through a mental health crisis or who is beginning to develop a mental health issue. This can involve offering reassurance, listening, and helping the person to access professional help.

The following are some indicators that someone might be dealing with a mental health issue:

- Changes in behavior or mood
- Withdrawing from social activities
- Increased use of alcohol or drugs
- Difficulty eating or sleeping
- Excessive anxiety or worry

If you think that the person you are caring for may be dealing with a mental health problem, it is crucial to provide support and encourage them to get help from a qualified professional.

# Conclusion

Being a caregiver comes with a lot of responsibility, however if you have the necessary information and skills, you can confidently handle emergencies and offer effective support. You can provide the person you are caring for the best care possible by learning the fundamentals of first aid, recognizing when to seek professional assistance, and prioritizing your own safety.

Remember that giving first aid is the first step in the chain of survival, and your actions can greatly affect the outcome of an emergency.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## **1. Where can I get training for first aid and CPR?**

Philippine Red Cross provides training for first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Other than this, they also have Basic Life Support Child and Infant Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Training and Water Safety Programs.

## **2. Can I give pain medications during first aid?**

First aiders should not give pain medicine unless they are medically trained. You may only help them if the person is conscious and has their own prescribed pain medication. Over-the-counter medicines can be offered, but it is safest to avoid giving any medication especially if you do not know the person's potential allergies and medical history.

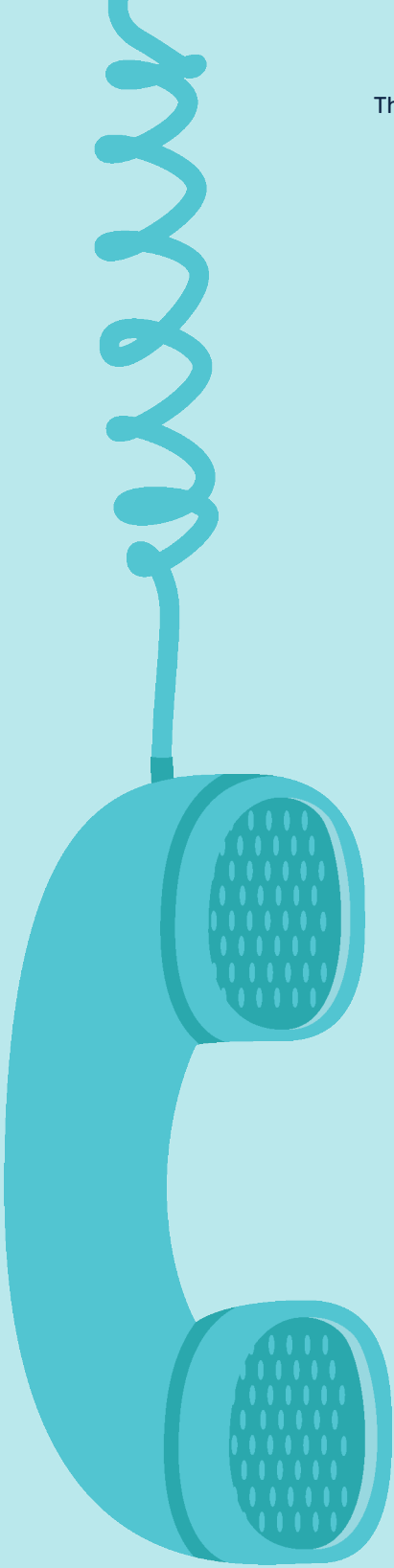
### 3. What is the first aid treatment for heart attack?

If you think the person is having a heart attack, then you must call emergency services and get the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) while you stay beside the person. Speak calmly and gently around the person. If the person has heart medicine, assist them with taking it. If they lose consciousness, immediately begin CPR.

### 4. What does RICE stand for in first aid?

RICE is an acronym: Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation. Used to care for sprains, strains, and similar injuries. Ensure to relieve pressure by helping the person to lie down, put ice to reduce swelling and pain, compress the area by using bandage, and elevate it.





- Philippine National Emergency Hotline: **911**
- DOH Health Emergency Management Bureau: **(02) 8711-1001 to 02 / (02) 8740-5030**
- Philippine Red Cross Emergency Hotline: **143 or (02) 527-0000**

# Support and Connection













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