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Basic First Aid

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In an emergency, it can be vital that you know first aid. First, remember these five steps:

- Stay calm so you can decide how to help the person.
- Look at the scene around you to determine whether it is safe for you and any injured people to be there.
- Get help. Call 9-1-1, or 0 for the operator, and be able to explain exactly where you are.
- Look at the injured person. Is he or she awake? Breathing? Bleeding?
- Administer first aid if needed.

Here are some actions to take for various injuries, emergencies or medical conditions:

Choking

- Keep the person calm.
- 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.
- Repeat these steps until the person can breathe.

Cuts, scrapes and punctures

- Wash your hands.
- Wash the wound with soap and water.
- Apply a bandage to the wound.
- Wash your hands again.

If the bleeding doesn't stop:

- Have the person sit down.
- 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.
- Wash your hands again.

Nosebleeds

- If a person has a nosebleed, him or her these instructions:
- Sit down.
- Lean forward and put your chin to your chest.
- Squeeze the bony part of your nose and wait until the bleeding stops. You may have to wait as long as 10 minutes.
- Don't put anything up the nose to stop the bleeding, and don't lean backward.

Stings and bites

- Wash the wound with soap and water for several minutes.
- Control the bleeding (see previous section on Cuts, scrapes and punctures).
- Try to identify the animal or insect that bit the person. Look at its body and note its size and anything else that identifies it.
- If the wound is severe or the animal has escaped, the victim may need to see a doctor.

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