

How to provide help in an emergency

Not many people will be called to help in a serious emergency during their life, but there is always the chance that it could happen – and you must be prepared for if it does. There are some simple steps that you can take to take the pressure off others at the scene and also provide direct assistance to any injured persons. Here are some useful notes to remember; most are common sense but some can also be very helpful.

Firstly, ensure that you yourself are safe before offering assistance to others, as there is no need putting your own life on the line unless you can plausibly offer help to those who need it, despite it seeming to be the heroic thing to do. Next, ensure the safety of others. You need to make people aware of the situation so that nobody makes any unnecessarily rash decisions that might jeopardise their safety or the safety of others. You can also ensure the safety of others by looking for any signs of danger such as hazardous chemicals or smoke coming from any vehicles that may have been involved in the accident.

Check the casualties. You can do a quick check-over the casualties by assessing for signs of breathing or a pulse, and also asking them simple questions such as “can you hear me?” or “are you ok?” You can then perform the ABC check on their airway, breathing and circulation. You can open the casualty’s airway by tilting back their head and lifting the chin with two fingers. Make sure that casualties are breathing and have the ability to carry on breathing. This might involve performing CPR or clearing the airway. If there is no circulation round the body of the casualty, then you should perform chest compressions to encourage the flow of blood. This process should be combined with artificial ventilation to ensure that the blood being circulated is oxygenated.

You should then apply any treatment that is required. Attend to the most serious injuries first, such as those with bleeding unconsciousness. You can control bleeding by applying firm direct pressure to the wound and also elevating body parts where possible. If someone has contracted any burns, get quick access to cold water and pour it over the wound for around 15-20 minutes, or until the casualty no longer complains of pain. Broken bones should not be subject to much movement and should be rested until proper medical help arrives. If someone is complaining of neck pain or is unable to move their neck, do not move them as they may have a serious [spinal injury](#) and movement could only aggravate it.

About the Author

If you have suffered from a serious spinal or [head injury](#) then contact the experts at Irwin Mitchell, who also deal with [clinical negligence](#) cases.

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