

Introduction to First Aid

Introduction to First Aid – Quick Reference Notes

1. What Is First Aid?

- **Definition:** Immediate, temporary care given to a person who is injured or suddenly ill, before professional medical help arrives.
 - **Goals (the “Three P’s”):**
 1. **Preserve life** – keep the person alive.
 2. **Prevent further injury** – stop the situation from worsening.
 3. **Promote recovery** – minimize pain and begin the healing process.
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2. Legal and Ethical Foundations

Aspect	Key Points
Consent	Obtain explicit permission before treating a conscious person. If the person is unconscious, implied consent applies.
Good Samaritan Laws	Provide legal protection for volunteers who act in good faith, as long as they stay within their training.
Confidentiality	Respect privacy; share information only with medical personnel or when required by law.
Scope of Practice	Perform only the techniques you are trained for; avoid invasive procedures unless absolutely necessary (e.g., CPR).

3. Primary Survey – “ABCD” (Rapid Assessment)

Step	What to Check	Action
A – Airway	Is the airway clear? Look for obstructions, facial injuries, or foreign bodies.	If blocked, open the airway (head? tilt/chin? lift or jaw? thrust) and remove visible objects.

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Step	What to Check	Action
B – Breathing	Look, listen, feel for breath. Count respiratory rate.	If absent or inadequate, give rescue breaths (mouth-to-mouth or barrier device) and prepare for CPR.
C – Circulation	Check pulse (carotid or radial), look for bleeding.	Control severe bleeding (direct pressure, tourniquet if needed), start chest compressions if no pulse.
D – Disability (Neurological)	Assess level of consciousness using AVPU (Alert, Voice, Pain, Unresponsive).	Monitor, protect the head, and prevent further injury.

If any step reveals a life-threatening problem, address it immediately before moving on to the secondary survey.

4. Secondary Survey – Detailed Assessment

1. History (AMPLE)

- Allergies
- Medications
- Past medical history
- Last oral intake
- Events leading to the injury/illness

2. Physical Examination

- **Head-to-toe inspection** – look for wounds, deformities, swelling.
- **Palpation** – gently feel for tenderness or abnormal masses.
- **Vital signs** – pulse, respiration, blood pressure (if equipment available), temperature.

3. Re-evaluate

- Continuously monitor ABCs and the victim's condition while providing care.
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5. Common First Aid Situations & Basic Interventions

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Situation	Immediate Action	Additional Tips
Bleeding (external)	Apply direct pressure with a clean cloth; elevate if possible.	If pressure fails, use a pressure bandage or tourniquet (proximal to injury, 2-3 inches above).
Shock	Lay the person flat, elevate legs 12-18" (if no head/neck injury). Keep warm, reassure.	Do not give food or drink; monitor vital signs.
Burns	Cool the burn with cool (not ice-cold) running water for 10-20	