

Other Common Life-Threatening Emergencies

Anaphylaxis ▪ Signs and symptoms include trouble breathing, hives or facial swelling. ▪ Call 9-1-1 immediately if the person has severe allergies, breathing issues or signs of shock. ▪ Give care. Assist with prescribed epinephrine or antihistamines and monitor them. NOTE: This is a Care First situation. Do not delay care to look for a phone.	
Asthma Attack ▪ Signs and symptoms include wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, gasping or trouble speaking. ▪ Call 9-1-1 immediately if symptoms worsen or the person lacks medication or an action plan. ▪ Give care. Assist with prescribed asthma medication (quick-relief) and monitor them.	
Burn ▪ Signs and symptoms include burns that may appear red, black, brown or white, with swelling, blisters, pain or numbness. ▪ Call 9-1-1 immediately for serious burns (deep, large, on critical areas or caused by hazardous sources). ▪ Give care. Cool the burn with clean, cool running water for 5–20 minutes. Use a cool compress if water isn't available—never use ice. Monitor them and give care if needed.	
Diabetic Emergency ▪ Signs and symptoms include confusion, drowsiness, dizziness, slurred speech or appearing intoxicated. ▪ Call 9-1-1 immediately if the person is unresponsive or not fully awake. Put them in a recovery position and monitor them. ▪ Give care for an alert and awake person. • High blood sugar: Encourage insulin use and recheck in 30 minutes. • Low blood sugar or unsure: Give 15–20g of sugar (e.g., juice, candy, glucose tablets). Assist with glucagon if prescribed. • Monitor them and call 9-1-1 if their condition worsens.	

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(Continued)

Heart Attack

- **Signs and symptoms** include chest discomfort, pain in arms/back/neck/jaw, shortness of breath, nausea or clammy skin.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately** and get an AED and first aid, if available.
- **Give care.**
 - Have them chew two to four 81 mg low-dose aspirin tablets or one 325 mg regular-strength aspirin tablet, if possible and allowable.
 - Assist with chest pain medication (nitroglycerin), if prescribed.
 - Monitor them and give CPR/AED if they go into cardiac arrest.



Seizure

- **Signs and symptoms** include loss of consciousness, convulsions, vocalizations, staring or an aura.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately** if the person is injured, unresponsive, pregnant, seizing in water, seizing for the first time or if the seizure lasts over 5 minutes or repeats.
- **Give care.**
 - During a seizure, do not restrain the person—move objects away, monitor and turn them on their side, if safe.
 - After the seizure, check for responsiveness and breathing, and give care if needed.



Shock

- **Signs and symptoms** include cool, clammy skin, rapid heart rate/breathing, confusion or nausea.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately** if shock is suspected.
- **Give care.**
 - Treat the cause (e.g., control bleeding).
 - Lay them flat and elevate their feet if no injury or place them in a recovery position if vomiting or decreased alertness.
 - Do not give them food or drink. Maintain their body temperature. Monitor them and give care if needed.



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(Continued)

Stroke

- Use **FAST** to quickly recognize stroke signs.
 - **Face:** One side of the face is weak/droops.
 - **Arm:** One arm drifts down or appears weak when both arms are raised.
 - **Speech:** Slurred speech or trouble speaking.
 - **Time:** If any one of these signs are present, call 9-1-1 immediately and note time they began.
- **Other signs and symptoms** include confusion, vision trouble and sudden severe headache.
- **Give care.** Monitor them and place them in a recovery position if needed.



Opioid Overdose

- **Signs and symptoms** include drug-related items, slow or gasping breaths, bluish/gray skin, unresponsiveness or cardiac arrest.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately**, whether the person is responsive or not.
- **Give care** according to the condition found:
 - **If unresponsive and not breathing normally:** Start CPR and AED use; give naloxone as soon as it is available without delaying CPR and AED use.
 - **If breathing slowly, not fully awake or confused:** Give naloxone and monitor them.
 - **If awake and breathing:** Monitor them and give care if needed.



Head Injury

- **Signs and symptoms** may include changes in behavior or mental status; pain or pressure in the head, neck or back; loss of movement, balance or sensation; seizure; nausea or vomiting; impaired breathing or vision; or visible injuries.
- **Call 9-1-1 immediately** if you suspect a head, neck or spinal injury, even if symptoms seem mild.
- **Give care.** Keep the person still and in the position found unless CPR or bleeding control is needed. Do not remove helmets unless necessary. Maintain their body temperature. Monitor them and give care as needed.



For more information, download the
First Aid App at redcross.org/apps

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