

## Laboratory First Aid

### 1. Basic First Aid

- A working knowledge of basic first aid is important for all laboratory personnel. The following may be of first aid assistance until the victim can receive formal medical care. Appropriate medical assistance can be obtained by calling 911 and/or the emergency department. In all cases, follow the Department of Pathology Accident Policy for follow-up medical care, reporting, and investigation.

### 2. CPR

- CPR training is taught throughout the community. All laboratory personnel are encouraged to attend CPR training. **DO NOT** attempt CPR if you are not qualified to do so.

### 3. Airway Obstruction

- For a **conscious** victim that is standing or sitting who has skin discoloration and/or an ineffective cough, the rescuer asks, "Can you speak?" If there is no response, you should:
  1. Stand behind victim, one leg placed between the victim's legs
  2. Wrap arms around victim's waist
  3. Make a fist with one hand
  4. Place thumb side against victim's abdomen, in middle, slightly above navel and well below tip of xiphoid process (located directly below sternal notch)
  5. Grasp fist with other hand
  6. Press into victim's abdomen with quick upward thrust
- For an **unconscious** victim, you should
  1. Place victim in supine position, face up
  2. Kneel astride victim's thighs
  3. Place heel of hand against victim's abdomen in midline above navel and well below xiphoid process (located directly below sternal notch)
  4. Place second hand directly on top of first
  5. Press into abdomen with quick upward thrusts
  6. Open mouth
  7. Perform finger sweep
    - Open mouth by grasping tongue and lower jaw
    - Use index finger in a hooking motion to dislodge foreign body
    - Grasp foreign body and remove (if visible)

- Open airway and attempt to ventilate
- If unable to ventilate, perform Heimlich Maneuver again
- Additional finger sweep
- Attempt to ventilate
- Repeat

#### **4. Bleeding**

- For a bleeding victim, apply direct pressure to victim's wound by placing your palm on a dressing directly over the injured site. Use a compress, or thick pad of cloth, if available, since it will absorb blood and enhance the clotting process. **DO NOT REMOVE THE COMPRESS** if bleeding continues; just add more cloth pads as needed. A pressure bandage may be applied to hold the pad in place. Elevate the wound if it is on the hand, arm, or leg, if there is no fracture.

#### **5. Broken Bones**

- For a fracture, prevent any movement of the victim's injured parts.
- Follow Pathology Accident Policy for follow-up medical attention.

#### **6. Burns**

- There are three general classifications of burns, which refer to the depth of skin damage. First-degree is least severe. Third-degree shows deep tissue destruction. Contact the emergency department for immediate medical care for third-degree burns.
- For any first- or second-degree burn, submerge affected part under cold water. If it is a chemical burn, assist the victim in removing clothing and flush with shower for a minimum of five minutes.
- Follow the Pathology Accident Policy for follow-up care and reporting.

#### **7. Care for the Shock Victim**

- The signs of shock include pale or blushed skin, moist skin, rapid and faint pulse, increased breathing rate, weakness, and vomiting.
  - If in doubt about the victim's injuries, keep victim lying flat. Raise the victim's feet about 10 inches, but lower them if there are signs of breathing difficulty.
  - If the victim has a head injury, keep him or her flat or propped up. Never have the head lower than the body.
  - Cover the victim to prevent the victim from chilling.
  - Follow Pathology Accident Policy for immediate medical care.

## 8. Poisoning

- For poisoning, do the following:
  - **Eye aid**
    - Immediately begin flushing the eyes with water and continue for 15 minutes. Use an eyewash or safety shower or water tap in the sink. Assist the victim by supporting the head so that the water flows across the eyeball. Contact the Emergency Department for immediate treatment following the 15-minute flushing procedure.
  - **Skin aid**
    - Remove clothing and flush skin with large amounts of water. Assist the victim and contact the Emergency Department for further instructions.
  - **Other**
    - Conscious poisoning victims should be referred immediately to the Emergency Department.
    - Unconscious poisoning victims should be given artificial respiration and CPR, if indicated, until a physician arrives.
    - A convulsing victim should not be restrained. Loosen the convulsing victim's clothing and remove objects in the area to avoid injury.
    - Call for Emergency Medical Care
    - Follow Pathology Accident Policy for follow-up care and reporting.

## 9. Accidental Biological Exposure

- **Eye aid**
  - Immediately begin flushing the eyes with water and continue for 15 minutes. Contact Employee Health Services.
  - Follow Pathology Accident Policy for follow-up care and reporting.

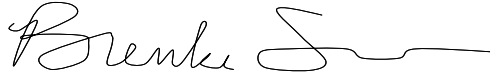
## References

Gile, T. J. (2007, April). *Complete Guide to Laboratory Safety* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.).  
Marblehead, MA: HCPPro, Inc.

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