

FIRST AID

When a person is injured, a quick response is crucial. First aid will have to be given until health professionals arrive on the scene. The first-aider is the first link in the chain of emergency care, which ends with the arrival of specialized emergency workers.

All workplaces should at least have

- an emergency plan in case of accidents;
- a first-aid kit;
- basic information on what first aid measures to take; and
- a list of emergency numbers prominently displayed for all to see.

Ideally, emergency first aid should:

- provide an effective response to a life-threatening danger;
- minimize the consequences of the incident; and
- ensure the survival of the injured person(s).

Protection and prevention

Important things to remember

If a person

- is bleeding heavily, apply pressure to the wound with a clean swab (not a tourniquet);
- has fractured a bone, do not move the person;
- is suffering from wounds, cuts or a contusion, lie the person down;
- feels ill or loses consciousness, lie the person on his or her side, check for breathing and make sure that nothing is obstructing his or her air passages;
- has been burned, rinse the burn with cool water for at least 20 minutes to lower the temperature of the burn.

Important: Protect yourself when helping others.

Any wounds on exposed skin (such as hands or arms) should be covered with a watertight bandage to prevent all contact with blood.

Handwashing is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections.

- If you have blood or blood-stained bodily fluids on your hands or any other skin surface, wash them as soon as possible with soap and water.
- If you are unable to wash your hands right away, use an alcohol-based quick-drying antiseptic. Then wash your hands as soon as possible with soap and water.

Wear disposable medical-grade gloves:

- If you have to touch blood or blood-stained bodily fluids
- If you handle blood-covered objects
- If you clean blood-covered surfaces

Change gloves immediately if they are punctured or torn. Never re-use disposable gloves, even if they appear to be in good condition.

If you wear gloves, wash your hands as soon as you take them off.

And :

- Use a "check valve" mask when providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Clean and disinfect blood-covered surfaces and objects:
- Mix one part bleach (5.25%) with 9 parts water. The bleach must always be used alone, that is, not mixed with another disinfectant or cleanser.
- Always wear disposable gloves when cleaning.
- Remove blood or visible debris with a paper towel.

- Then apply the bleach solution with a wet cloth or spray bottle.
- Let the solution sit for at least 10 minutes.
- Rinse with lots of water and dry.
- Clean your blood-stained clothing. Handle the soiled clothing as little as possible, and always with gloves. Carry the clothes in a plastic bag and wash them as usual with soap in your washing machine.
- Dispose of the waste safely: put all compresses, paper towels, gloves and rags in a plastic bag, seal it tightly, and put it in the garbage.

Help and Resources

- Info-santé at 811
- In an emergency, dial 911.
- Poison Control Centre: 1-800-463-5060

More information :

- [Commission de la santé et la sécurité du travail \(CSST\)](#)
- Portail du réseau public québécois en santé au travail - premiers secours et premiers soins en milieu de travail in French only