

WHEN TO CALL EMS

As the lead story indicates, some people are not cut out to give emergency first aid, and many do not know how. That's where emergency medical services (EMS) come in. **May 16-22 is National EMS Week**, sponsored by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP).

ACEP recommends you ask the following questions to determine whether to call EMS:

- ➔ Is the condition life-threatening?
- ➔ Could it worsen and become life-threatening on the way to the hospital?
- ➔ Does the victim require the skills or equipment of emergency medical technicians?
- ➔ Could distance or traffic conditions cause a delay in getting to the hospital?

In addition, ACEP advises that children with the following signs need to be taken to the emergency room:

- ➔ Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- ➔ Bluish or gray skin color
- ➔ Not drinking enough fluids
- ➔ Not waking up or interacting with parents
- ➔ Being too irritable to be held
- ➔ Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- ➔ Fever with rash

When you do call 911, calmly and clearly give your name, address, and phone number, the location of the victim, and the medical problem. Don't hang up until told to, so you can continue to exchange necessary information and instructions.



RIDDLES OF THE MONTH

- 1). How can you come face-to-face with a hungry, angry lion, dare him to fight, and still be unafraid?
- 2). If you were surrounded by 10 lions, 4 tigers, 3 grizzly bears and 4 leopards, how could you escape?
- 3). Spell mousetrap with three letters.
- 4). What animal has a chip on its shoulder?
- 5). What animal breaks the law?

Answers on page 2 Safety Bits & Pieces

Safety Matters



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Emergency! *Know what to do*

Did you know?

- Someone is injured on the job every 20 seconds.
- Every hour someone dies at work.
- When a person stops breathing, or when the heart stops beating, brain damage can occur within 4 to 6 minutes.
- Every year nearly half a million Americans die because of heart attacks, usually within 2 hours of having an attack.

Because of these alarming realities, it's important for you to know basic first aid. With a little first-aid training, you can provide valuable help in an emergency—and maybe even save a life—in such common workplace situations as:

- Wounds causing heavy bleeding
- Stopped breathing
- Choking
- Heart attack
- Heatstroke
- Burns
- Broken bones
- No pulse
- Shock
- Eye injuries
- Chemical poisoning

Throughout this newsletter, we cover first aid for various situations. But not everybody is cut out to deal with a medical emergency, and you should never try to do more than you feel comfortable doing. If you're not able to give first aid, you can be the one who calls 911 or who meets the emergency medical technicians (EMTs) at the door or who stays with the victim to give moral support until the EMTs arrive.

Indeed, when an emergency occurs, someone needs to get to the victim to see what's happened. Someone needs to notify the supervisor. Someone may need to apply first aid. Someone may need to call 911 and stay on the line with the dispatcher. So know and follow your workplace emergency procedures. And participate in all workplace emergency drills.

HOW TO AVOID MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS (MSDs)

Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) can be a real danger at work and not just for computer users. Employees whose jobs require them to stay in one position—whether sitting or standing—for prolonged periods are at risk of developing MSDs. Here are two easy ways to minimize that risk:

1. **Take breaks.** Move around on your regularly scheduled work breaks to rest work muscles and engage the rest of your body. Also take periodic mini-breaks to stand up or sit down, whichever is the opposite of your regular work position.
2. **Use proper posture** when standing or sitting:
 - Stand with your weight distributed between both feet. Shift your weight from side to side periodically. You can also put a foot up on a stool or ledge to ease strain on your back muscles.
 - Sit with your feet flat on the floor or on a footrest and your thighs parallel to the floor such that the bend of your knees forms an approximately 90-degree angle. Sit back in your chair and make sure the chair has good support for your lower back.

Safety Bits & Pieces

DAILY SAFETY COMMITMENT

Each day you should recommit yourself to personal safety in your job. For example, take time to reorient yourself to the safety issues in your workplace. Use this list of general safety orientation areas to ensure that you are aware of the safety issues in your workplace:

- ☑ General hazards in your area
- ☑ Specific hazards involved in each task
- ☑ Hazards in other areas of the workplace
- ☑ Workplace safety policies and work rules
- ☑ Who to talk with about safety questions
- ☑ Smoking rules and smoking areas
- ☑ How to select, use, and care for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) like safety goggles, earplugs, and gloves
- ☑ Safe housekeeping rules
- ☑ Facility security procedures and systems
- ☑ How to use tools and equipment safely
- ☑ Safe lifting techniques and material handling procedures
- ☑ Safe methods for handling, using, or storing hazardous materials and the location of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs)
- ☑ Location of emergency equipment such as fire extinguishers, eyewash stations, and first-aid supplies
- ☑ Evacuation procedures, routes and meeting places
- ☑ What to do if there is an accident or injury
- ☑ How and to whom to report emergencies, accidents, and near misses

Are you still aware of each of the safety issues that apply to your job? If not, get yourself reoriented toward total safety.

SAFETY TIPS OF THE MONTH

Follow these lawn equipment safety tips:

- ☑ NEVER let children play on or around lawnmowers, especially riding mowers. More than 800 children are injured annually by riding lawnmowers.
- ☑ STOP the lawn mower whenever anyone enters the area in which you are working.
- ☑ NEVER operate any lawn equipment while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- ☑ PROTECT your eyes and ears. Wear safety glasses and earplugs when using lawn equipment. Clear sticks, rocks, and other debris from your lawn before mowing.
- ☑ DRESS right for the job. Wear sturdy shoes, close fitting clothing, and nothing that can get caught on moving parts.

RIDDLE OF THE MONTH ANSWERS

- 1). Walk calmly to the next cage.
- 2). Wait until the merry-go-round stops and then get off!
- 3). C-A-T
- 4). A chipmunk
- 5). A cheetah



First Aid for Eye Injuries

A primer

Particles in the Eye

- Lift upper eyelid out and down over lower lid, and let tears wash out particle.
- If that does not work, flush eye with water until the particle comes out.
- If that does not work, or if pain or redness continues, bandage eye lightly and get medical attention.

Chemical Splashes or Burns

- Hold eye open and flush with water for at least 15 minutes.
- Call for emergency medical assistance.
- Check the MSDS for the chemical and give to emergency medical personnel.

Light Burns

- You may not feel anything for up to a day.
- Then you may feel a gritty sensation, light sensitivity, redness, or swelling.
- Keep eyes closed and get medical attention.

Blow to the Eye

- Apply a cold compress without pressure for 15 minutes to reduce swelling.
- Get medical attention at once if pain continues or if vision is affected.

Penetrating Object in the Eye

- Call for emergency medical assistance immediately.
- Do not remove, move, or put pressure on the object.
- Immobilize the object by placing a paper cup or soft, bulky dressing around the object and securing it in place with a bandage.
- Bandage both eyes so that the victim will keep the injured eye still.

QUOTATION OF THE MONTH

Keep your thoughts positive,
because your thoughts become your words.

Keep your words positive,
because your words become your behavior.

Keep your behavior positive,
because your behavior becomes your habits.

Keep your habits positive,
because your habits become your values.

Keep your values positive,
because your values become your destiny.
MAHATMA GANDHI (1869 - 1948)

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE



First Aid for Scrapes

Don't let it get infected!

Small cuts and abrasions can be the start of something big. For example:

- *An employee of a concrete company skinned a knuckle, then missed two weeks of work because of blood poisoning.*
- *Another worker cut a finger on a grinding machine and had to miss several weeks of work because of blood poisoning.*
- *A car wash attendant lost five weeks of work after failing to treat the knuckles skinned on a bumper.*

Tetanus and blood poisoning are two of the most common killers that enter the body through small, harmless-looking cuts. Other serious infections may result in amputation. So follow these tips from the American Medical Association:

- Never put your mouth over a wound or breathe on the wound. There are many germs in the mouth that can infect the wound.
- Don't allow fingers, used handkerchiefs, or other soiled materials to touch the wound.
- Immediately cleanse the wound and surrounding skin with soap and warm water, wiping away from the wound.
- Hold a sterile pad firmly over the wound until the bleeding stops.
- Replace the pad and bandage as necessary to keep the wound clean and dry.
- Leave use of antiseptics to the advice of a doctor or other health professional.