

FIRST AID AT THE MUSEUM

The following document is intended as a guide to help you understand what to do in the case of common emergencies.

Those covered are

- Burns and Scalds
- Bleeding
- Electrical
- Fractures
- Heart Attack
- Stroke

In the event that you need to call an ambulance, you will need to give the post code, which is **LU7 9EY**. We are situated on Vicarage Road, opposite the village hall, Pitstone.

Useful other numbers are:

Village Medical Centre, Yardley Ave., 01525 223211

Beds Fire Service 01234 845000

A & E Stoke Mandeville 01296 315000

Thames Valley Police 101

Burns and scalds

In the event of a burn or scald:

- Cool the burn as quickly as possible with cold (but not ice-cold) running water for a minimum of 10 minutes or until the pain is relieved.
- Call 999 or seek medical help if necessary.
- While cooling the burn, carefully remove any clothing or jewellery, unless it is attached to the skin.
- Keep the person warm using a blanket or layers of clothing (avoiding the injured area) to prevent hypothermia. This is a risk if you are cooling a large burnt area, particularly in babies, children and elderly people.
- Cover the burn lengthways with strips of cling film or a clean plastic bag if the burn is on a hand or foot. If no plastic film is available, use a sterile dressing or non-fluffy material. Do not wrap the burn as this may lead to swelling and further injury.
- Do not put creams, lotions or sprays on the burn.
- If appropriate, raise the limb to reduce the swelling and offer pain relief.

For chemical burns, wear protective gloves, remove any clothing affected, brush the chemical off the skin if it is a powder and rinse the burn with cold running water for a minimum of 20 minutes. If possible, determine what has caused the injury.

Be careful not to injure yourself, and wear protective clothing if necessary. Call 999 or 112 and arrange immediate medical attention.

Bleeding

If someone has severe bleeding, the main aim is to prevent further loss of blood and minimise the effects of shock (see below).

First, dial 999 and ask for an ambulance as soon as possible.

If you have disposable gloves, then use them to reduce the risk of any infection being passed on.

Check that there is nothing embedded in the wound. If there is, take care not to press down on the object. Instead, press firmly on either side of the object and build up padding around it before bandaging to avoid putting pressure on the object itself. If there is nothing embedded:

- Apply and maintain pressure to the wound with your hand, using a clean pad if possible.
- Use a clean dressing to bandage the wound firmly.
- If the wound is on a limb and there are no fractures, raise the limb to decrease the flow of blood.
- If bleeding continues through the pad then apply another pad over the top and bandage it in place. Do not remove the original pad or bandage.

If a body part has been severed, such as a finger, do not put it in direct contact with ice. Wrap it in a plastic bag or cling film, then wrap it in a soft material and keep it cool. Once it is wrapped, if possible, place the severed body part in crushed ice.

Always seek medical help for the bleeding unless it is minor.

Electricity

If someone has been electrocuted, dial 999 or 112 for an ambulance.

Switch off the electrical current at the mains to break the contact between the person and the electrical supply.

If you cannot reach the mains supply:

- Do not go near or touch the person until you are sure any electrical supply has been cut off.
- Protect yourself by standing on some insulating material (such as a phone book).
- Using something dry and non-metal, such as a wooden broom handle, push the person away from the electrical source, or move the source away from the person if this is easier.
- If the person is not breathing, carry out CPR and call an ambulance.

Always seek medical help unless the shock is very minor.

Fractures

It can be difficult to tell if a person has a broken bone, or a joint or muscle injury. If you're in any doubt, treat the injury as a broken bone.

If the person is unconscious, has difficulty breathing or is bleeding severely, these must be dealt with first.

If the person is conscious, prevent any further pain or damage by keeping the injury still until you get them safely to hospital. Assess the injury and decide the best way to get them to hospital. If they have a broken finger or arm, you may be able to drive them yourself without causing more harm.

- If they have a broken leg, do not move the person but keep them in the position you found them in. Support the injured part with anything you have handy, for example rolled up blankets or clothes. Call for an ambulance.
- If you suspect they have injured or broken their spine (back) do not move them and call for an ambulance.
- Look out for signs of shock. If the person is pale, cold and clammy, has a weak pulse and rapid shallow breathing, they are probably in shock (see below).

If you think that the person may have shock, lie them down and loosen any tight clothing. Do not raise an injured leg. Otherwise, if their injuries allow, raise their legs above the level of their heart by placing something suitable under their feet such as blankets or cushions.

Do not give the person anything to eat or drink as they may need a general anaesthetic when they reach hospital.

Heart attack

A heart attack is one of the most common life-threatening heart conditions in the UK.

If you think a person is having or has had a heart attack, make them as comfortable as possible and call 999 or 112 for an ambulance. Symptoms of a heart attack include:

- chest pain – the pain is usually located in the centre of the chest and can feel like a sensation of pressure, tightness or squeezing
- pain in other parts of the body – it can feel as if the pain is travelling from the chest to one or both arms, jaw, neck, back or abdomen

Sit the person down.

If they are conscious, reassure them and give them a 300mg aspirin tablet to chew slowly (unless there is any reason not to give them aspirin, for example if they are under 16 or allergic to it). If the person has any medication for angina, such as a spray or tablets, help them to take it. Monitor their vital signs, such as breathing, until help arrives.

If the person becomes unconscious, open their airway, check their breathing and, if necessary, start CPR.

Stroke

The FAST guide is the most important thing to remember when dealing with people who have had a stroke. The earlier they receive treatment, the better. Call for emergency medical help straight away.

If you suspect a person has had a stroke, use the FAST guide:

- Facial weakness: is the person unable to smile evenly, or are their eyes or mouth droopy?
- Arm weakness: is the person only able to raise one arm?
- Speech problems: is the person unable to speak clearly or understand you?
- Time to call 999 or 112 for emergency help if a person has any of these symptoms.

