

safety matters

Toolbox Talks for

From your safety partners at Cool Insuring Agency, Inc.

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First Aid Basics

An accident requires prompt action to help employees who are injured. For example, if you are in the company of one of your co-workers who trips and starts bleeding, your knowledge of simple first aid basics may be essential.

Bleeding

Should you or a co-worker receive a cut, the most important action is to stop the bleeding immediately. Have the victim lie down, then apply direct pressure on top of the wound with a sterile pad or the cleanest piece of cloth you can find. If the cloth becomes saturated with blood, keep adding more pads or cloth and secure them with a bandage.

If the wound is on an arm or a leg, and the blood flow is particularly hard to stop, you can try pressing on the brachial or femoral arteries to reduce the flow. Always seek immediate medical attention for any profuse bleeding.

Chemicals

You may also need to work with chemicals from time to time. Whenever possible, put on appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including goggles and gloves. Should chemicals get into the eye, use the emergency eyewash station. If one is not provided or nearby, dilute the chemical by pouring water into the eyes. Pour at least a quart of water into the corner of the eye so that it runs over the surface and flows out the other side.

If chemicals get onto the skin, wash the area repeatedly with large amounts of water. Remove any contaminated clothing. Check the label on the chemical to see if any additional steps should be taken.

Call 9-1-1 if dizziness, nausea, chest pains or shortness of breath are present.

Particles

If a foreign particle gets embedded into the eye, do not try to remove it like you would a chemical. Instead, have the victim lie flat, place a sterile pad over the eye, bandage it in place, and get medical help immediately. Avoid movement that could drive the particle deeper into the eye. If the particle is under the eyelid or floating on the surface of the eyeball, you can try removing it with the corner of a clean piece of cloth. But never rub the eye to get it out.

Shock

An accident often brings on a condition called shock. A person suffering from shock may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Weakness
- Confusion
- Cold, pale, clammy skin
- Nausea
- Vacant eyes with dilated pupils

To help someone in shock, place the victim on his/her back with feet elevated, unless head or chest injuries are present. Then, raise the head and shoulders with pillows. Next, place blankets over and under the body to conserve body heat. Don't administer any fluids unless expert medical help is delayed for at least 30 minutes. If that is the case, then give him/her half a glass of plain, lukewarm water every 15 minutes. Discontinue fluids if the person becomes nauseated.

Remember, first aid is the best immediate response to an injury, but you should always seek appropriate medical attention afterwards.

Brushing up on your first aid basics helps you to be prepared in the event of an unexpected workplace accident.

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