

Emergency Preparedness and First Aid

Caredemy

Online Training Academy



Course Name:

Emergency Preparedness and First Aid

Course Description:

This course will give an overview of emergency procedures, emergency preparedness, and basic first aid that can be given until emergency services arrive.

Course Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, the learner will be able to:

- Recognize emergencies and implement emergency procedures
- Describe what to do for common accidents or injuries until emergency services arrive
- Describe how to get help in the event of an emergency
- Describe steps that should be taken following an incident
- Describe the recovery position

Course Requirements:

Participants must complete all learning modules and pass the multiple-choice course assessment.



Natural Disasters

Occurrences of natural disasters are unpredictable and often happen suddenly, leaving little time for preparation. These disasters encompass a range of events, including:

- hurricanes
- tornadoes
- earthquakes
- flash floods
- windstorms
- rainstorms
- forest fires.

It's important to note that fires within homes, while devastating, are typically preventable and therefore not classified as natural disasters. Addressing fire prevention measures and knowing how to respond safely in case of a household fire are crucial components of emergency planning.

Advanced Planning for Natural Disasters and Emergencies

It's essential to anticipate potential natural disasters and emergencies and plan accordingly. Consider what actions you would take in various scenarios, such as power outages, fires, or floods, and familiarize yourself with the emergency procedures of any caregiving facilities where you work.

When caring for adults and seniors in their homes, follow these steps:

Home Assessment: Familiarize yourself with the layout of the entire home, including the basement and attic, to prepare for emergencies.

Power Failure Plan: Identify the location of essential items like flashlights, batteries, candles, and matches in case of power outages.

Smoke and Fire Alarms: Regularly check and maintain smoke and fire alarms, ensuring they have working batteries.

Evacuation Plan: Know the evacuation procedures for various disasters like fires, hurricanes, floods, windstorms, or tornadoes.

Communication: Keep in touch with the home care agency for guidance during emergencies and always call 911 for immediate assistance.



Specific Considerations for Different Disasters

Hurricanes: Monitor weather updates and follow evacuation guidance provided by your company if necessary.

Tornadoes: Stay alert during Tornado Watches and take immediate shelter in basements or tornado shelters during Tornado Warnings.

Earthquakes: Be aware of earthquake safety protocols, especially if residing near fault lines like the New Madrid fault line and know where to find shelter both during and after the quake.

Floods: Floods are often predictable but be vigilant as flash floods can occur suddenly. Determine if the client's residence is in a flood-prone area and familiarize yourself with the evacuation procedures, especially in regions prone to flash floods.

Forest Fires: In most cases, there is advance notice for evacuation due to forest fires. Take evacuation warnings seriously as fires can spread rapidly. Follow the emergency plan, gather essential items, and evacuate promptly.

By proactively planning for potential emergencies and disasters, caregivers can ensure the safety and well-being of the adults and seniors under their care.

Fire Safety

Preventing fires is crucial, so review fire safety guidelines regularly:

- Avoid smoking while working and discourage senior clients from smoking indoors.
- Ensure smoking is done with caution, using ashtrays and avoiding smoking in bed or when oxygen is in use.
- Check electrical cords for damage and promptly report any issues.
- Monitor the condition of light bulbs and appliances for signs of electrical problems.
- Turn off and unplug electrical appliances when not in use.
- Double-check ovens and stoves to ensure they are turned off.
- Keep flammable items away from heat sources like stoves and radiators.
- Avoid using candles whenever possible due to their fire hazard.

If candles must be used, extinguish them before leaving, especially as seniors may forget to do so and may have diminished senses like smell, making candles



more dangerous. Be cautious with candle placement to prevent contact with flammable objects and limit burning time.

Fire Preparedness

Be Prepared for Fires:

- Familiarize yourself with the location of fire extinguishers in the home.
- Understand how to use a fire extinguisher by following the directions provided.
- Identify where extra blankets and sheets are stored, as they can be used to smother small fires.

In Case of a Fire:

- Immediately call 911.
- If safe to do so, attempt to extinguish small fires, such as those on the stove top.
- Escort the senior out of the home to safety.
- Close doors of empty rooms to contain the fire and slow the spread of smoke and flames.

Note: Ensure that fire extinguishers are present in the client's home if you are providing home care. Verify the functionality of fire extinguishers and be aware of their location.

Being Prepared for Emergencies

Having an emergency preparedness plan is crucial. This plan should include:

- Evacuation procedures: Know how to evacuate safely.
- Evacuation locations: Identify where to go for safety.
- Client assistance during emergencies: Ensure you have essential items to assist clients.
- Roles and responsibilities: Determine who will handle tasks such as contacting family or arranging backup caregivers.
- Implementation of emergency plans: Understand the signs indicating that the emergency plan needs to be activated.

Upon employment, ensure your employer provides you with an Emergency and Disaster Plan. Request a thorough review of this plan. If you work in an area prone to natural disasters, such as earthquakes, hurricanes, or tornadoes, ask



your employer to share past experiences and lessons learned from managing previous emergencies.

Safety Guidelines During Natural Disasters and Emergencies

Ensure you have essential items for the person in your care:

- Medications
- Clothing
- Medical equipment (walker, oxygen)
- Food
- Water
- First aid kit

Create a list of these items to stay prepared in case of an emergency:

- Familiarize yourself with the "Emergency Plan" provided by your organization and understand the necessary steps to take when it's activated.
- Review your company's Emergency Plan annually to maintain familiarity with the procedures.
- Prioritize safety during your workday, and promptly report any malfunctioning equipment to your manager.
- Develop a Game Plan for your Must-Have Items by assembling a natural disaster kit.
- Stay informed by checking the weather forecast daily before heading to work.

Basic First Aid

First aid entails providing immediate assistance for emergency injuries like cuts or sprains, offering basic aid to alleviate discomfort or prevent further harm.

Cuts: Thoroughly cleanse the wound with an antiseptic (alcohol or antiseptic wipe) and apply a bandage. For deep cuts, use a butterfly wound closure (tape) to seal torn skin and refer to a medical professional for further evaluation and treatment.

Sprains: Reduce swelling by applying ice and elevating the affected area, then secure with an elastic brace for support.



CPR First Aid: CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) involves chest compressions and rescue breaths administered to individuals in cardiac arrest. Training in CPR is crucial for caregivers. Some clients with heart disease may have heart defibrillator life vests or machines at home, requiring proper training for use.

An Unconscious Victim

If the victim is unconscious but breathing and has no other injuries that would prevent them from being moved to another location, place them in the recovery position until help arrives. Observe them closely to ensure they continue to breathe normally.

If the victim is unconscious but not breathing normally, call 911 and begin CPR, if you have been trained to do so. Otherwise, follow the instructions of the emergency dispatcher until help arrives.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can occur after eating certain foods or after an insect sting. It can occur very quickly – within seconds or minutes of coming into contact with the allergen. During anaphylactic shock, it may be difficult for the victim to breathe because their throat and tongue may swell and obstruct their airway. You should call 911 right away and check if the victim is carrying medication. Many people with severe allergies carry an adrenaline self-injector, which is a pre-loaded syringe. You can help the victim self-administer or, if you are trained to do so, give it to them yourself. Look after the person until help arrives and make sure they are comfortable.

Heavy Bleeding

If a person is bleeding heavily, you should work to minimize the effects of shock and prevent further bleeding. First, dial 911 and ask for an ambulance. If you have disposable gloves, use them to reduce the risk of infection. After checking that there's nothing embedded in the wound, press firmly and maintain pressure on the wound with your gloved hand, using a clean pad or dressing if one is available. Apply pressure until the bleeding stops. If there is an object embedded, you should instead press firmly down on either side of the object and build up the pad around it to avoid putting pressure on the object. If bleeding continues through the pad, apply another pad over the top and continue to apply pressure. Do not remove the original pad or dressing.



If a body part, such as a finger, has been severed, place it in a plastic bag and do not wash it. Wrap the bag in soft fabric and put it in a container of crushed ice. Do not let the limb touch the ice. Ensure that the severed limb is transported to hospital with the victim.

Burns and Scalds

If someone has a burn or scald:

- Cool the burn quickly with cool running water for at least 20 minutes
- Call 911 if needed
- While cooling the burn, carefully remove jewelry or clothing unless it's attached to the skin
- If you're cooling a large burnt area, be aware it may cause hypothermia
- Cover the burn loosely with a clean, dry dressing. Do not wrap tightly
- Do not apply creams, lotions, or sprays
- Wear protective gloves for chemical burns

Electric Shock

For electric shock occurring in a residence, first switch off the electrical current at the mains to break the contact between the person and the electrical supply. If you cannot reach the main electrical supply:

- Do not go near or touch the person until you're sure the electrical supply has been switched off
- Once the power supply is off, and if the person isn't breathing, dial 911 for an ambulance

Fractures

It is sometimes difficult to tell if a person has a broken bone or joint. If you are in doubt, treat the injury as if it were broken. If the person is unconscious or bleeding heavily, you should first deal with these problems first and dial 911 for an ambulance. If the person is conscious, you should prevent further pain or damage by keeping the fracture as still as possible until you can get them to hospital either through ambulance or car. You should call 911 if:

- The person is in a lot of pain and in need of strong painkilling medication
- It is obvious they have broken a leg
- A bone is sticking out or at an odd angle



- Extremities become blue or white, or are numb
- You suspect they have an injured or broken back

Do not give the casualty anything to eat or drink because they may need anesthetic when they reach hospital.

Heart Attack

A heart attack is one of the most common life-threatening health conditions. If you think someone is having or has had a heart attack, you should call 911 and move them into a comfortable seated position. If they're conscious, reassure them and ask them to take 300mg of aspirin, to be chewed slowly. If the person has any medication for angina, help them to take it. Monitor vital signs such as breathing until help arrives. If the person deteriorates and becomes unconscious, open their airway, check their breathing, and if needed begin CPR. Symptoms of a heart attack include:

- Chest pain, usually located in the center or left side of the chest. May feel like pressure, tightness, or squeezing
- Pain in other parts of the body such as the arms, jaw, neck, back or abdomen

Poisoning

Poisoning is potentially life-threatening. Alcohol poisoning can cause similar symptoms. If you believe that someone has swallowed a poisonous substance, call the Poison Control Centers at 800-222-1222, or 911. The effects of poisoning are dependent on the substance swallowed, but can include:

- Vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Pain or burning sensation

You should try to find out what was swallowed so you can tell the paramedic or doctor. Do not give the person anything to eat or drink unless directed by a healthcare professional. Do not try to cause vomiting. Stay with the person as they may deteriorate or become unconscious. You should not perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation as the victim's mouth or airway may be contaminated with poison.



Shock

If a serious injury or illness occurs, you should be on the lookout for signs of shock. Shock is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the circulatory system fails to provide enough oxygenated blood to the body, depriving the body's vital organs of oxygen. Shock usually occurs as a result of severe blood loss, but can also occur after severe vomiting, a heart attack, a bacterial infection, severe burns, or anaphylaxis. Signs of shock include:

- Pale, cold, clammy skin
- Sweating
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Weakness and dizziness
- Feeling sick or vomiting
- Thirst
- Yawning or sighing

If a person has signs of shock, call 911, treat any obvious injuries, lie the person down if able, keep them warm with a coat or blanket, do not give them anything to eat or drink, give them lots of comfort, and monitor them closely.

Stroke

The acronym FAST is most important when you suspect a person may be having a stroke. The earlier a person receives treatment the better.

Face: face drooping to one side, not able to smile, or mouth/eye drooping

Arms: not able to lift both arms and keep them there because of weakness or numbness in one arm

Speech: slurred or garbled speech, not able to talk

Time: dial 911 immediately if you notice these signs or symptoms

Getting Help

When you call 911 for help, be prepared to give the following information:

- Telephone number
- Address you're calling from
- Brief description of what is wrong and whether the person is bleeding, unconscious, or not breathing



The emergency dispatcher may advise you on ways to assist the victim until help arrives.

Recovery Position

If a person is unconscious but breathing and has no other life-threatening conditions, you should place them in the recovery position. This position keeps their airway clear and open, ensuring they will not choke on vomit or other fluids. Follow these steps for the recovery position:

- Kneel on the floor next to the person, who is lying on their back
- Extend the arm nearest you at a right angle to their body with palm facing up
- Take their other arm and fold it so the back of their hand rests on the cheek closest to you, holding it in place
- Using your free hand to bend the person's knee farthest from you to a right angle
- Roll the person onto their side by pulling the bent knee
- Their bent arm should support their head while their other arm prevents them from rolling too far
- Be sure their leg is bent at a right angle
- Open their airway by gently tilting their head back and lifting their chin
- Stay with the person and monitor their condition until help arrives

Spinal Injury

If you believe a person has a spinal injury, do not move them until emergency services arrive. A spinal injury should be suspected if:

- The person has been in an accident that's directly affected their spine, such as a fall from a height or being struck in the back
- Complains of severe neck or back pain
- Won't move their neck
- Feels weak, numb, or paralyzed
- Has lost control of their limbs, bladder, or bowels

