

First Aid in Traffic Collisions

At some time or other you may come upon a traffic collision where the persons involved need help quickly. There are things you can do even if you are not trained in first aid. You should also keep a first aid kit in your vehicle.

1. If a first-aider, nurse or doctor arrives on the scene, turn the responsibility over and offer your help.
2. If you are the only one who can help, here are some things to do. As others arrive on the scene, ask them to assist you. **Examine the injured** and help each in order of priority: stopped breathing, severe bleeding, and unconsciousness. Try to help the injured where they lie.
 - If a person has stopped breathing, attempt artificial respiration at once.
 - To stop bleeding, a compress made from any clean cloth should be pressed directly over the wound. Elevate the limb and when the bleeding has subsided, find a cloth and bandage over the dressing snugly, but not too tightly. Articles of clothing can be used as bandages.
 - Unconscious casualties may suffocate if left on their back. When injuries permit, turn them on their side.
3. **Do not move the injured** unless there are life-threatening conditions or the victims are in danger of further injury (i.e. vehicle fire, gasoline leak, traffic, etc.). Unnecessary movement of a person with an injured neck or spine can complicate the injury, or even cause death.
 - If removal is necessary, the injured should be moved in the direction of the long axis of the body by the arms or shoulders, or by the feet. Move them carefully and as gently as possible. Use any available blanket, or coat or similar item as a skid if time permits.
4. **Make the injured as comfortable as possible.** The best position is usually flat on the back. Keep them warm. If the ground is cold, put a blanket or heavy garment down.
 - Elevate the legs 20 to 25 cm (8 to 10 inches). In case of bleeding from the lower part of the face and jaw, turn the injured on their side.
5. **Do not give fluids**, stimulants or alcohol.
6. **Await the arrival of authorities** and ambulance to proceed with any situation where you are unsure.
7. **Cooperate fully with authorities**, giving them any information, names and addresses you may have obtained, as well as your knowledge of the circumstances of the collision.
8. **If there are fatalities**, do not move or permit the bodies to be moved until the authorities arrive and take over.