

# Adventurer's MK

## LIFE SAVER

### General

When an adventurer comes upon an unconscious or injured person, he or she must accurately evaluate the casualty to determine the first aid measures needed to prevent further injury or death. They should seek medical assistance as soon as possible, but they should not interrupt the performance of first aid measures. To interrupt the first aid measures may cause more harm than good to the casualty.

After performing first aid, the adventurer must proceed with the evaluation and continue to monitor the casualty for development of conditions which may require the performance of necessary basic lifesaving measures, such as clearing the airway, rescue breathing, preventing shock, and controlling bleeding. He should continue to monitor the casualty until relieved by medical personnel.

Adventurers may have to depend upon their first aid knowledge and skills to save themselves (self-aid) or other adventurers (buddy aid/ lifesaver). They may be able to save a life, prevent permanent disability, or reduce long periods of Hospitalisation by knowing WHAT to do, WHAT NOT to do, and WHEN to seek medical assistance.

### NOTE

You may have to *carefully remove* clothing from the injured adventurer to complete the evaluation or administer first aid. Begin by removing the outer—most components (open, unfasten or cut the closures, fasteners, or straps), then remove any successive layers in the same manner. Be sure to follow other notes, cautions and warnings regarding procedures in contaminated situations and when a broken back or neck is suspected. Continue to evaluate.

### Understanding Vital Body Functions for First Aid

In order for the adventurer to learn to perform first aid procedures, he must have a basic understanding of what the vital body functions are and what the result will be if they are damaged or not functioning.

**a. Breathing Process.** All humans must have oxygen to live. Through the breathing process, the lungs draw oxygen from the air and put it into the blood. The heart pumps the blood through the body to be used by the cells that require a constant supply of oxygen. Some cells are more dependent on a constant supply of oxygen than others. For example, cells of the brain may die within 4 to 6 minutes without oxygen. Once these cells die, they are lost forever since they do not regenerate. This could result in permanent brain damage, paralysis, or death.

**b. Respiration.** Respiration occurs when a person inhales (oxygen is taken into the body) and then exhales (carbon dioxide [CO<sub>2</sub>] is expelled from the body). Respiration involves the—

- **Airway.** The airway consists of the nose, mouth, throat, voice box, and windpipe. It is the canal through which air passes to and from the lungs.
- **Lungs.** The lungs are two elastic organs made up of thousands of tiny air spaces and covered by an airtight membrane. The *bronchial tree* is a part of the lungs.
- **Rib cage.** The rib cage is formed by the muscle connected ribs, which join the spine in back, and the breastbone in front.

The top part of the rib cage is closed by the structure of the neck, and the bottom part is separated from the abdominal cavity by a large dome-shaped muscle called the *diaphragm*. The diaphragm and

rib muscles, which are under the control of the respiratory centre in the brain, automatically *contract* and *relax*. *Contraction* increases and *relaxation* decreases the size of the rib cage. When the rib cage increases and then decreases, the air pressure in the lungs is first less and then more than the atmospheric pressure, thus causing the air to rush into and out of the lungs to equalize the pressure. This cycle of inhaling and exhaling is repeated about 12 to 18 times per minute.

**c. Blood Circulation.** The heart and the blood vessels (arteries, veins, and capillaries) circulate blood through the body tissues. The heart is divided into two separate halves, each acting as a pump. The left side pumps oxygenated blood (bright red) through the arteries into the capillaries; nutrients and oxygen pass from the blood through the walls of the capillaries into the cells. At the same time waste products and CO<sub>2</sub> enter the capillaries. From the capillaries the oxygen poor blood is carried through the veins to the right side of the heart and then into the lungs where it expels the CO<sub>2</sub> and picks up oxygen. Blood in the veins is dark red because of its low oxygen content. Blood does not flow through the veins in spurts as it does through the arteries. The entire system of the heart, blood vessels, and lymphatics is called the *circulatory system*.

**(1) Heartbeat.** The heart functions as a pump to circulate the blood continuously through the blood vessels to all parts of the body. It contracts, forcing the blood from its chambers; then it relaxes, permitting its chambers to refill with blood. The rhythmical cycle of contraction and relaxation is called the *heartbeat*. The normal heartbeat is from 60 to 80 beats per minute.

**(2) Pulse.** The heartbeat causes a rhythmical expansion and contraction of the arteries as it forces blood through them. This cycle of expansion and contraction can be felt (monitored) at various points in the body and is called the *pulse*. The common points for checking the pulse are at the—

- **Side of the neck (*carotid*).**  
**Carotid pulse.** To check the carotid pulse, feel for a pulse on the side of the casualty's neck closest to you. This is done by placing the tips of your first two fingers beside his Adam's apple.
- **Groin (*femoral*).**  
**Femoral pulse.** To check the femoral pulse, press the tips of your first two fingers into the middle of the groin
- **Wrist (*radial*).**  
**Radial pulse.** To check the radial pulse, place your first two fingers on the thumb side of the casualty's wrist.
- **Ankle (*posterior tibial*).**  
**Posterior tibial pulse.** To check the posterior tibial pulse, place your first two fingers on the inside of the ankle.

#### NOTE

**DO NOT** use your thumb to check a casualty's pulse because you may confuse the beat of your pulse with that of the casualty.

#### Adverse Conditions

- a. **Lack of Oxygen.** Human life cannot exist without a continuous intake of oxygen. Lack of oxygen rapidly leads to death. First aid involves knowing how to open the airway and restore breathing.
- b. **Bleeding.** Human life cannot continue without an adequate volume of blood circulating through the body to carry oxygen to the tissues. An important first aid measure is to stop the bleeding to prevent the loss of blood.
- c. **Shock.** Shock means there is an inadequate blood flow to the vital tissues and organs. Shock that remains uncorrected may result in death even though the injury or condition causing the shock would not otherwise be fatal. Shock can result from many causes, such as loss of blood, loss of fluid from deep burns, pain, and reaction to the sight of a wound or blood.

First aid includes preventing shock, since the casualty's chances of survival are much greater if they do not develop shock.

- d. **Infection.** Recovery from a severe injury or a wound depends largely upon how well the injury or wound was initially protected. Infections result from the multiplication and growth (spread) of harmful microscopic organisms (sometimes referred to as germs). These harmful microscopic organisms are in the air, water, and soil, and on the skin and clothing. Some of these organisms will immediately invade (contaminate) a break in the skin or an open wound. The objective is to keep wounds clean and free of these organisms. A good working knowledge of basic first aid measures also includes knowing how to dress a wound to avoid infection or additional contamination.

### Basics of First Aid

Most injured or ill adventurers are able to return to their team primarily because they are given appropriate and timely first aid followed by the best medical care possible. Therefore, all adventurers must remember the basics.

- Check for **BREATHING**: Lack of oxygen intake (through a compromised airway or inadequate breathing) can lead to brain damage or death in very few minutes.
- Check for **BLEEDING**: Life cannot continue without an adequate volume of blood to carry oxygen to tissues.
- Check for **SHOCK**: Unless shock is prevented, first aid performed, and medical treatment provided, death may result even though the injury would not otherwise be fatal.

### Evaluating a Casualty

- a. The time may come when you must instantly apply your knowledge of first aid measures. This could occur during training situations, or while in a day to day status. Any adventurer observing an unconscious and/or ill, injured, or wounded person must carefully and skilfully evaluate them to determine the first aid measures required to prevent further injury or death. He should seek help from medical personnel as soon as possible, but must not interrupt his evaluation of the casualty or fail to administer first aid measures. A second adventurer may be sent to find medical help. One of the cardinal principles for assisting a casualty is that you (the initial rescuer) must continue the evaluation and first aid measures, until another individual relieves you. If, during any part of the evaluation, the casualty exhibits the conditions (such as shock) for which the adventurer is checking, the adventurer must stop the evaluation and immediately administer first aid.
- b. After providing first aid, the adventurer must proceed with the evaluation and continue to monitor the casualty for further complications until relieved by medical personnel.

### NOTE

Remember, when evaluating and/or administering first aid to a casualty, you should seek medical aid as soon as possible. **DO NOT** stop first aid measures, but if the situation allows, send another adventurer to find medical aid.

### To evaluate a casualty, perform the following steps:

#### (1) Check the casualty for responsiveness.

This is done by gently shaking or tapping him while calmly asking, "Are you OK?" Watch for a response. If the casualty does not respond, go to step (2). If the casualty responds, continue with the evaluation.

- (a) If the casualty is conscious, ask him where he feels different than usual or where it hurts. Ask him to identify the location of pain if he can, or to identify the area in which there is no feeling.
- (b) If the casualty is conscious but is choking and cannot talk, stop the evaluation and begin first aid measures.

## **WARNING**

**If a broken back or neck is suspected, do not move the casualty unless his life is in immediate danger (such as close to a burning vehicle). Movement may cause permanent paralysis or death.**

### **(2) Check for breathing.**

- (a) If the casualty is breathing, proceed to step (3).
- (b) If the casualty is not breathing, stop the evaluation and begin first aid measures to attempt to ventilate the casualty. Attempt to open the airway, if an airway obstruction is apparent, clear the airway obstruction, then ventilate.
- (c) After successfully ventilating the casualty, proceed to step (3).

### **(3) Check for bleeding.**

Look for spurts of blood or blood soaked clothes. Also check for *both* entry and exit wounds. If the casualty is bleeding from an open wound, stop the evaluation and begin first aid procedures as follows for a—

- (a) Wound of the arm or leg - put on a field or pressure dressing.
- (b) Open head wound - apply a dressing to an open head wound.
- (c) Open chest wound - apply a dressing to an open chest wound.
- (d) Open abdominal wound - applying a dressing to an open abdominal wound.

### **(4) Check for shock.**

If the signs and symptoms of shock are present, stop the evaluation, and begin first aid measures immediately. The following are the nine signs and symptoms of shock.

- (a) Sweaty but cool skin (clammy skin).
- (b) Paleness of skin. (In dark-skinned adventurers look for a grayish cast to the skin.)
- (c) Restlessness or nervousness.
- (d) Thirst.
- (e) Loss of blood (bleeding).
- (f) Confusion (does not seem aware of surroundings).
- (g) Faster than normal breathing rate.
- (h) Blotchy or bluish skin, especially around the mouth.
- (i) Nausea or vomiting.

## **WARNING**

**Leg fractures must be splinted before elevating the legs as a first aid measure for shock.**

### **(5) Check for fractures.**

(a) Check for the following signs and symptoms of a back or neck injury and perform first aid procedures as necessary.

- Pain or tenderness of the back or neck area.
- Cuts or bruises on the back or neck area.
- Inability of a casualty to move or decreased sensation to extremities (paralysis or numbness).
- Ask about ability to move (paralysis).
- Touch the casualty's arms and legs and ask whether he can feel your hand (numbness).
- Unusual body or limb position.

(b) Immobilize any casualty suspected of having a back or neck injury by doing the following:

- Tell the casualty not to move.
- If a back injury is suspected, place padding (rolled or folded to conform to the shape of the arch) under the natural arch of the casualty's back. (For example, a blanket/poncho may be used as padding.)

## **WARNING**

**Do not move casualty to place padding.**

- If a neck injury is suspected, immediately immobilize (manually) the head and neck. Place a roll of cloth under the casualty's neck, and put weighted boots (filled with dirt or sand) or rocks on both sides of his head.

(c) Check the casualty's arms and legs for open or closed fractures.

Check for *open* fractures by looking for—

- Bleeding.
- Bones sticking through the skin.
- Check for pulse.

Check for *closed* fractures by looking for—

- Swelling.
- Discoloration.
- Deformity.
- Unusual body position.
- Check for pulse.

(d) Stop the evaluation and begin first aid measures if a fracture to an arm or leg is suspected.

(e) Check for signs/symptoms of fractures of other body areas (for example, shoulder or hip) and provide first aid as necessary.

**(6) Check for burns.**

Look carefully for reddened, blistered, or charred skin; also check for singed clothing. If burns are found, stop the evaluation and begin first aid procedures.

**NOTE**

Burns to the upper torso and face may cause respiratory complications. When evaluating the casualty, look for singed nose hair, soot around the nostrils, and listen for abnormal breath sounds or difficulty breathing.

**(7) Check for possible head injury.**

Look for the following signs and symptoms:

- Unequal pupils.
- Fluid from the ear(s), nose, mouth, or injury site.
- Slurred speech.
- Confusion.
- Sleepiness.
- Loss of memory or consciousness.
- Staggering in walking.
- Headache.
- Dizziness.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Paralysis.
- Convulsions or twitches.
- Bruising around the eyes and behind the ears.

If a head injury is suspected, continue to watch for signs which would require performance of rescue breathing, first aid measures for shock, or control of bleeding; seek medical aid.

**BASIC MEASURES FOR FIRST AID**

**General**

Several conditions that require immediate attention are an inadequate airway, lack of breathing, and excessive loss of blood (circulation). A casualty without a clear airway or who is not breathing may die from lack of oxygen. Excessive loss of blood may lead to shock, and shock can lead to death; therefore, you must act immediately to control the loss of blood. All wounds are considered to be contaminated, since infection-producing organisms (germs) are always present on the skin and clothing, and in the soil, water, and air. Any missile or instrument (such as shrapnel, knife) causing a wound pushes or carries the germs into that wound. Infection results as these organisms multiply.

That a wound is contaminated does not lessen the importance of protecting it from further contamination. You must dress and bandage a wound as soon as possible to prevent further contamination.

#### **NOTE**

It is also important that you attend to any airway, breathing, or bleeding problems **IMMEDIATELY** because these problems, if left unattended, may become life threatening.

### **OPEN THE AIRWAY AND RESTORE BREATHING**

#### **Breathing Process**

All humans must have oxygen to live. Through the breathing process, the lungs draw oxygen from the air and put it into the blood. The heart pumps the blood through the body to be used by the cells that require a constant supply of oxygen. Some cells are more dependent on a constant supply of oxygen than others. For example, cells of the brain may die within 4 to 6 minutes without oxygen. Once these cells die, they are lost forever since they do not regenerate. This could result in permanent brain damage, paralysis, or death.

#### **Assessment of and Positioning the Casualty**

- a. **CHECK** for responsiveness establish whether the casualty is conscious by gently shaking him and asking, "Are you OK?"
- b. **CALL** for help.
- c. **POSITION** the unconscious casualty so that he is lying on his back and on a firm surface.

#### **WARNING**

**If the casualty is lying on his chest (prone position), cautiously roll the casualty as a unit so that his body does not twist (which may further complicate a back, neck, or spinal injury).**

- (1) Straighten the casualty's legs. Take the casualty's arm that is nearest to you and move it so that it is straight and above his head. Repeat the procedure for the other arm.
- (2) Kneel beside the casualty with your knees near his shoulders (leave space to roll his body) Place one hand behind his head and neck for support. With your other hand, grasp the casualty under his far arm.
- (3) Roll the casualty towards you using a steady, even pull. His head and neck should stay in line with his back.
- (4) Return the casualty's arms to his side. Straighten his legs. Reposition yourself so that you are now kneeling at the level of the casualty's shoulders. However, if a neck injury is suspected and the jaw-thrust technique will be used, kneel at the casualty's head, looking towards his feet.

#### **Opening the Airway of an Unconscious or Not Breathing Casualty**

The tongue is the single most common cause of an airway obstruction. In most cases, simply using the head-tilt/chin-lift technique can clear the airway. This action pulls the tongue away from the air passage in the throat

- a. Call for help and then position the casualty. Move (roll) the casualty onto his back

#### **NOTE**

Perform finger sweep. If foreign material or vomitus is visible in the mouth, it should be removed, but do not spend an excessive amount of time doing so.

- b. Open the airway using the jaw-thrust or head-tilt/chin-lift technique.

#### **CAUTION**

The head-tilt/chin-lift technique is an important procedure in opening the airway; however, use extreme care because excess force in performing this manoeuvre may cause further spinal injury. In a casualty with a suspected neck injury or severe head trauma, the safest approach to opening the airway is the jaw-thrust technique because in most cases it can be accomplished without extending the neck.

**(1) Perform the jaw-thrust technique.**

The jaw-thrust may be accomplished by the rescuer grasping the angles of the casualty's lower jaw and lifting with both hands, one on each side, displacing the jaw forward and up. The rescuer's elbows should rest on the surface on which the casualty is lying. If the lips close, the lower lip can be retracted with the thumb. If mouth-to-mouth breathing is necessary, close the nostrils by placing your cheek tightly against them. The head should be carefully supported without tilting it backwards or turning it from side to side. If this is unsuccessful, the head should be tilted back very slightly. The jaw-thrust is the safest first approach to opening the airway of a casualty who has a suspected neck injury because in most cases it can be accomplished without extending the neck.

**(2) Perform the head-tilt/chin-lift technique.**

Place one hand on the casualty's forehead and apply firm, backward pressure with the palm to tilt the head back. Place the fingertips of the other hand under the bony part of the lower jaw and lift, bringing the chin forward. The thumb should not be used to lift the chin.

**NOTE**

The fingers should not press deeply into the soft tissue under the chin because the airway may be obstructed.

**(3) Check for breathing (while maintaining an airway).**

After establishing an open airway, it is important to maintain that airway in an open position. Often the act of just opening and maintaining the airway will allow the casualty to breathe properly. Once the rescuer uses one of the techniques to open the airway (jaw-thrust or head-tilt/chin-lift), he should maintain that head position to keep the airway open. Failure to maintain the open airway will prevent the casualty from receiving an adequate supply of oxygen. Therefore, while maintaining an open airway the rescuer should check for breathing by observing the casualty's chest and performing the following actions within 3 to 5 seconds:

- (a) **LOOK** for the chest to rise and fall.
- (b) **LISTEN** for air escaping during exhalation by placing your ear near the casualty's mouth.
- (c) **FEEL** for the flow of air on your cheek
- (d) **PERFORM** rescue breathing if the casualty does not resume breathing spontaneously.

**NOTE**

If the casualty resumes breathing, monitor and maintain the open airway. He should be transported to an HOSPITAL, as soon as practical.

**Rescue Breathing (Artificial Respiration)**

**a.** If the casualty does not promptly resume adequate spontaneous breathing after the airway is open, rescue breathing (artificial respiration) must be started. Be calm! Think and act quickly! The sooner you begin rescue breathing, the more likely you are to restore the casualty's breathing. If you are in doubt whether the casualty is breathing, give artificial respiration, since it can do no harm to a person who is breathing. If the casualty is breathing, you can feel and see his chest move. If the casualty is breathing, you can feel and hear air being expelled by putting your hand or ear close to his mouth and nose.

**b.** There are several methods of administering rescue breathing. The mouth-to-mouth method is preferred; however, it cannot be used in all situations. If the casualty has a severe jaw fracture or mouth wound or his jaws are tightly closed by spasms, use the mouth-to-nose method.

**Preliminary Steps—All Rescue Breathing Methods**

- a. Establish unresponsiveness. Call for help. Turn or position the casualty.
- b. Open the airway.
- c. Check for breathing by placing your ear over the casualty's mouth and nose, and looking toward his chest.

1. **LOOK** for rise and fall of the casualty's chest.
2. **LISTEN** for sounds of breathing.
3. **FEEL** for breath on the side of your face. If the chest does not rise and fall and no air is exhaled, then the casualty is not breathing.
4. **PERFORM** rescue breathing if the casualty is not breathing.

#### **NOTE**

Although the rescuer may notice that the casualty is making respiratory efforts, the airway may still be obstructed and opening the airway may be all that is needed. If the casualty resumes breathing, the rescuer should continue to maintain an open airway.

#### **Mouth-to-Mouth Method**

In this method of rescue breathing, you inflate the casualty's lungs with air from your lungs. This can be accomplished by blowing air into the person's mouth. The mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing method is performed as follows:

- a.* If the casualty is not breathing, place your hand on his forehead, and pinch his nostrils together with the thumb and index finger of this hand. Let this same hand exert pressure on his forehead to maintain the backward head tilt and maintain an open airway. With your other hand, keep your fingertips on the bony part of the lower jaw near the chin and lift

#### **NOTE**

If you suspect the casualty has a neck injury and you are using the jaw-thrust technique, close the nostrils by placing your cheek tightly against them.

- b.* Take a deep breath and place your mouth (in an airtight seal) around the casualty's mouth. (If the injured person is small, cover both his nose and mouth with your mouth, sealing your lips against the skin of his face.)
- c.* Blow two full breaths into the casualty's mouth (1 to 1 ½ seconds per breath), taking a breath of fresh air each time before you blow. Watch out of the corner of your eye for the casualty's chest to rise. If the chest rises, sufficient air is getting into the casualty's lungs. Therefore, proceed as described in step (1). If the chest does not rise, do the following (*a*, *b*, and *c* below) and then attempt to ventilate again.

**(1)** Take corrective action immediately by re-establishing the airway. Make sure that air is not leaking from around your mouth or out of the casualty's pinched nose.

**(2)** Reattempt to ventilate.

**(3)** If the chest still does not rise, take the necessary action to open an obstructed airway.

#### **NOTE**

If the initial attempt to ventilate the casualty is unsuccessful, reposition the casualty's head and repeat rescue breathing. Improper chin and head positioning is the most common cause of difficulty with ventilation. If the casualty cannot be ventilated after repositioning the head, proceed with foreign-body airway obstruction manoeuvres.

**(4)** After giving two slow breaths, which cause the chest to rise, attempt to locate a pulse on the casualty. Feel for a pulse on the side of the casualty's neck closest to you by placing the first two fingers (index and middle fingers) of your hand on the groove beside the casualty's Adam's apple (carotid pulse). (Your thumb should not be used for pulse taking because you may confuse your pulse beat with that of the casualty.) Maintain the airway by keeping your other hand on the casualty's forehead. Allow 5 to 10 seconds to determine if there is a pulse.

*(a)* If signs of circulation are present and a pulse is found and the casualty is breathing—**STOP**; allow the casualty to breathe on his own. If possible, keep him warm and comfortable.

*(b)* If a pulse is found and the casualty is not breathing, continue rescue breathing.

*(c)* If a pulse is not found, seek medically trained personnel for help as soon as possible.

#### **Mouth-to-Nose Method**



Use this method if you cannot perform mouth-to-mouth rescue breathing because the casualty has a severe jaw fracture or mouth wound or his jaws are tightly closed by spasms. The mouth-to-nose method is performed in the same way as the mouth-to-mouth method except that you blow into the nose while you hold the lips closed with one hand at the chin. You then remove your mouth to allow the casualty to exhale passively. It may be necessary to separate the casualty's lips to allow the air to escape during exhalation.

### **Heartbeat**

If a casualty's heart stops beating, you must immediately seek medical help. **SECONDS COUNT!** Stoppage of the heart is soon followed by cessation of respiration unless it has occurred first. Be calm! Think and act! When a casualty's heart has stopped, there is no pulse at all; the person is unconscious and limp, and the pupils of his eyes are open wide. When evaluating a casualty or when performing the preliminary steps of rescue breathing, feel for a pulse. If you DO NOT detect a pulse, seek medical help.

### **Airway Obstructions**

In order for oxygen from the air to flow to and from the lungs, the upper airway must be unobstructed.

**a.** Upper airway obstructions often occur because—

**(1)** The casualty's tongue falls back into his throat while he is unconscious. The tongue *falls back* and *obstructs* the airway; it is not swallowed by the casualty.

#### **NOTE**

Ensure the correct positioning and maintenance of the open airway for an injured or unconscious casualty.

**(2)** Foreign bodies become lodged in the throat. These obstructions usually occur while eating.

Choking on food (usually meat) is associated with—

- Attempting to swallow large pieces of poorly chewed food.
- Drinking alcohol.
- Slipping dentures.

**(3)** The contents of the stomach are regurgitated and may block the airway.

**(4)** Blood clots may form as a result of head and facial injuries.

**b.** Upper airway obstruction may cause either partial or complete airway blockage.

**(1) Partial airway obstruction.** The casualty may still have an air exchange. A good air exchange means that the casualty can cough forcefully, though he may be wheezing between coughs. You, the rescuer, should not interfere, and should encourage the casualty to cough up the object obstructing his airway on his own. A poor air exchange may be indicated by weak coughing with a high pitched noise between coughs. Further, the casualty may show signs of shock indicating a need for oxygen. You should assist the casualty and treat him as though he had a complete obstruction.

**(2) Complete airway obstruction.** A complete obstruction (no air exchange) is indicated if the casualty cannot speak, breathe, or cough at all. He may be clutching his neck and moving erratically. In an unconscious casualty, a complete obstruction is also indicated if after opening his airway you

### **Opening the Obstructed Airway—Conscious Casualty**

Clearing a conscious casualty's airway obstruction can be performed with the casualty either standing or sitting and by following a relatively simple procedure.

#### **WARNING**

**Once an obstructed airway occurs, the brain will develop an oxygen deficiency resulting in unconsciousness. Death will follow rapidly if breathing is not promptly restored.**

**a)** Ask the casualty if he can speak or if he is choking. Check for the universal choking sign.

- b) If the casualty can speak, encourage him to attempt to cough; the casualty still has a good air exchange. If he is able to speak or cough effectively, DO NOT interfere with his attempts to expel the obstruction.
- c) Listen for high pitched sounds when the casualty breathes or coughs (poor air exchange). If there is poor air exchange or no breathing, CALL FOR HELP and immediately deliver manual thrusts (either an abdominal or chest thrust).

**NOTE**

The manual thrust with the hands centred between the waist and the rib cage is called an abdominal thrust (or Heimlich manoeuvre). The chest thrust (the hands are centred in the middle of the breastbone) is used only for an individual in the advanced stages of pregnancy, in the markedly obese casualty, or if there is a significant abdominal wound.

**(1) Apply abdominal thrusts.** This can be accomplished by using the following procedures:

- (a) Stand behind the casualty and wrap your arms around his waist.
- (b) Make a fist with one hand and grasp it with the other. The thumb side of your fist should be against the casualty's abdomen, in the midline and slightly above the casualty's navel, but well below the tip of the breastbone
- (c) Press the fists into the abdomen with a quick backward and upward thrust
- (d) Each thrust should be a separate and distinct movement.

**NOTE**

Continue performing abdominal thrusts until the obstruction is expelled or the casualty becomes unresponsive.

- (e) If the casualty becomes unresponsive, call for help as you proceed with steps to open the airway, and perform rescue breathing.

**(2) Apply chest thrusts.** An alternate technique to the abdominal thrust is the chest thrust. This technique is useful when the casualty has an abdominal wound, when the casualty is pregnant, or when the casualty is so large that you cannot wrap your arms around the abdomen. To apply chest thrusts with casualty sitting or standing:

- (a) Stand behind the casualty and wrap your arms around his chest with your arms under his armpits.
- (b) Make a fist with one hand and place the thumb side of the fist in the middle of the breastbone (take care to avoid the tip of the breastbone and the margins of the ribs).
- (c) Grasp the fist with the other hand and exert thrusts
- (d) Each thrust should be delivered slowly, distinctly, and with the intent of relieving the obstruction.
- (e) Perform chest thrusts until the obstruction is expelled or the casualty becomes unresponsive.
- (f) If the casualty becomes unresponsive, call for help as you proceed with steps to open the airway and perform rescue breathing.

**Opening the Obstructed Airway—Casualty Lying Down or Unresponsive**

The following procedures are used to expel an airway obstruction in a casualty who is lying down, who becomes unconscious, or who is found unconscious (the cause unknown):

- a. If a conscious casualty who is choking becomes unresponsive, call for help, open the airway, perform a finger sweep, and attempt rescue breathing. If you still cannot administer rescue breathing due to an airway blockage, then remove the airway obstruction using the procedures as in *b* below.
- If a casualty is unresponsive when you find him (the cause unknown), assess or evaluate the situation, call for help, position the casualty on his back, open the airway, establish breathlessness, and attempt to perform rescue breathing.
  - a. Open the airway and attempt rescue breathing (perform mouth-to-mouth resuscitation).

- b.* If still unable to ventilate the casualty, perform 6 to 10 manual (abdominal or chest) thrusts.

**(1) To perform the abdominal thrusts:**

- (a)* Kneel astride the casualty's thighs.  
*(b)* Place the heel of one hand against the casualty's abdomen (in the midline slightly above the navel but well below the tip of the breastbone). Place your other hand on top of the first one. Point your fingers toward the casualty's head.  
*(c)* Press into the casualty's abdomen with a quick, forward and upward thrust. You can use your body weight to perform the manoeuvre. Deliver each thrust quickly and distinctly.  
*(d)* Repeat the sequence of abdominal thrusts, finger sweep, and rescue breathing (attempt to ventilate) as long as necessary to remove the object from the obstructed airway.  
*(e)* If the casualty's chest rises, proceed to feeling for pulse.

**(2) To perform chest thrusts:**

**(a)** Place the unresponsive casualty on his back, face up, and open his mouth. Kneel close to the side of the casualty's body.

1. Locate the lower edge of the casualty's ribs with your fingers. Run the fingers up along the rib cage to the notch
2. Place the middle finger on the notch and the index finger next to the middle finger on the lower edge of the breastbone. Place the heel of the other hand on the lower half of the breastbone next to the two fingers
3. Remove the fingers from the notch and place that hand on top of the positioned hand on the breastbone, extending or interlocking the fingers
4. Straighten and lock your elbows with your shoulders directly above your hands without bending the elbows, rocking, or allowing the shoulders to sag. Apply enough pressure to depress the breastbone 1 1/2 to 2 inches, and then release the pressure completely. Do this 6 to 10 times. Each thrust should be delivered quickly and distinctly.

**(b)** Repeat the sequence of chest thrust, finger sweep, and rescue breathing as long as necessary to clear the object from the obstructed airway.

**(c)** If the casualty's chest rises, proceed to feeling for his pulse.

**(3)** If you still cannot administer rescue breathing due to an airway obstruction, then remove the airway obstruction using the procedures in steps *(a)* and *(b)* below.

*(a)* Place the casualty on his back, face up, turn the unresponsive casualty as a unit, and call out for help.

*(b)* Perform finger sweep, keep casualty face up, use tongue-jaw lift to open mouth.

1. Open the casualty's mouth by grasping both his tongue and lower jaw between your thumb and fingers and lifting (tongue/jaw lift). If you are unable to open his mouth, cross your fingers and thumb (crossed-finger method) and push his teeth apart by pressing your thumb against his upper teeth and pressing your finger against his lower teeth.
2. Insert the index finger of the other hand down along the inside of his cheek to the base of the tongue. Use a hooking motion from the side of the mouth toward the centre to dislodge the foreign body

**WARNING**

**Take care not to force the object deeper into the airway by pushing it with the finger.**

**STOP THE BLEEDING AND PROTECT THE WOUND**

**General**

The longer a adventurer bleeds from a major wound, the less likely he will be able to survive his injuries. It is, therefore, important that the first aid provider promptly stop the external bleeding.

**Clothing**

In evaluating the casualty for location, type, and size of the wound or injury, cut or tear his clothing and carefully expose the entire area of the wound. This procedure is necessary to properly visualize injury and avoid further contamination. Clothing stuck to the wound should be left in place to avoid further injury. **DO NOT touch the wound**; keep it as clean as possible.

### **Entrance and Exit Wounds**

Before applying the dressing, carefully examine the casualty to determine if there is more than one wound. A missile may have entered at one point and exited at another point. The *EXIT* wound is usually *LARGER* than the entrance wound.

#### **WARNING**

**The casualty should be continually monitored for development of conditions which may require the performance of necessary basic lifesaving measures, such as clearing the airway and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. All open (or penetrating) wounds should be checked for a point of entry and exit and first aid measures applied accordingly.**

#### **WARNING**

**If the missile lodges in the body (fails to exit), DO NOT attempt to remove it or probe the wound. Apply a dressing. If there is an object extending from (impaled in) the wound, DO NOT remove the object. Apply a dressing around the object and use additional improvised bulky materials/dressings (use the cleanest material available) to build up the area around the object to stabilize the object and prevent further injury. Apply a supporting bandage over the bulky materials to hold them in place.**

### **Field Dressing**

- a. Use the field dressing; remove it from the wrapper and grasp the tails of the dressing with both hands

**DO NOT touch the white (sterile) side of the dressing, and DO NOT allow it to come in contact with any surface other than the wound.**

- b. Hold the dressing directly over the wound with the white side down. Pull the dressing open and place it directly over the wound.
- c. Hold the dressing in place with one hand. Use the other hand to wrap one of the tails around the injured part, covering about one-half of the dressing. Leave enough of the tail for a knot. If the casualty is able, he may assist by holding the dressing in place.
- d. Wrap the other tail in the opposite direction until the remainder of the dressing is covered. The tails should seal the sides of the dressing to keep foreign material from getting under it.
- e. Tie the tails into a nonslip knot over the outer edge of the dressing.

#### **DO NOT TIE THE KNOT OVER THE WOUND.**

In order to allow blood to flow to the rest of an injured limb, tie the dressing firmly enough to prevent it from slipping but without causing a tourniquet like effect; that is, the skin beyond the injury should not become cool, blue, or numb.

### **Manual Pressure**

- a. If bleeding continues after applying the sterile field dressing, direct manual pressure may be used to help control bleeding. Apply such pressure by placing a hand on the dressing and exerting firm pressure for 5 to 10 minutes. The casualty may be asked to do this himself if he is conscious and can follow instructions.
- b. Elevate an injured limb slightly above the level of the heart to reduce the bleeding

#### **WARNING**

**DO NOT elevate a suspected fractured limb unless it has been properly splinted.**

- c. If the bleeding stops, check shock; administer first aid for shock as necessary. If the bleeding continues, apply a pressure dressing.

## Pressure Dressing

Pressure dressings aid in blood clotting and compress the open blood vessel. If bleeding continues after the application of a field dressing, manual pressure, and elevation, then a pressure dressing must be applied as follows:

- a. Place a wad of padding on top of the field dressing, directly over the wound. Keep the injured extremity elevated.

### NOTE

Improvised bandages may be made from strips of cloth. These strips may be made from T-shirts, socks, or other garments.

- b. Place an improvised dressing (or cravat, if available) over the wad of padding. Wrap the ends tightly around the injured limb, covering the previously placed field dressing.
- c. Tie the ends together in a nonslip knot, directly over the wound site. **DO NOT** tie so tightly that it has a tourniquet-like effect. If bleeding continues and all other measures have failed, or if the limb is severed, then apply a tourniquet. Use the tourniquet as a **LAST RESORT**.  
When the bleeding stops, check for shock; administer first aid for shock as necessary.

### NOTE

If bleeding continues and all other measures have failed (dressings and covering wound, applying direct manual pressure, elevating the limb above the heart level, and applying a pressure dressing while maintaining limb elevation) *then apply digital pressure*.

## Digital Pressure

Digital pressure (often called “pressure points”) is an alternative method to control bleeding. This method uses pressure from the fingers, thumbs, or hands to press at the site or point where a main artery supplying the wounded area lies near the skin surface or over bone. This pressure may help shut off or slow down the flow of blood from the heart to the wound and is used in combination with direct pressure and elevation. It may help in instances where bleeding is not easily controlled, where a pressure dressing has not yet been applied, or where pressure dressings are not readily available.

## Tourniquet

### DANGER

**A tourniquet is only used on an arm or leg where there is a danger of the casualty losing his life (bleeding to death).**

*The tourniquet should not be used unless a pressure dressing has failed to stop the bleeding or an arm or leg has been cut off. On occasion, tourniquets have injured blood vessels and nerves. If left in place too long, a tourniquet can cause loss of an arm or leg. Once applied, it must stay in place, and the casualty must be taken to the nearest HOSPITAL as soon as possible. DO NOT loosen or release a tourniquet after it has been applied as release could precipitate bleeding and potentially lead to shock.*

## CHECK FOR SHOCK AND ADMINISTER FIRST AID MEASURES

### General

The term *shock* has a variety of meanings. In medicine, it refers to a collapse of the body’s cardiovascular system which includes an inadequate supply of blood to the body’s tissues. Shock stuns and weakens the body. When the normal blood flow in the body is upset, death can result. Early recognition and proper first aid may save the casualty’s life.

### Causes and Effects

**A.** There are three basic mechanisms associated with shock. These are—

1. The heart is damaged and fails to work as a pump.
2. Blood loss (heavy bleeding) causes the volume of fluid within the vascular system to be insufficient.

3. The blood vessels dilate (open wider) so that the blood within the system (even though it is a normal volume [the casualty is not bleeding or dehydrated]) is insufficient to provide adequate circulation within the body.

**B. Shock** may be the result of a number of conditions. These include—

- Dehydration.
- Allergic reaction to foods, drugs, insect stings, and snakebites.
- Significant loss of blood.
- Reaction to the sight of a wound, blood, or other traumatic scene.

Traumatic injuries, such as—

- Burns.
- Crush injuries.
- Blows to the body (which can cause broken bones or damage to internal organs).
- Head injuries.
- Penetrating wounds (such as from a knife or missile).

### **Signs and Symptoms of Shock**

Examine the casualty to see if he has any of the following signs and symptoms:

- Sweaty but cool skin (clammy skin).
- Weak and rapid pulse.
- Paleness of skin (in dark-skinned individuals they may have a greyish look to their skin).
- Restlessness, nervousness.
- Thirst.
- Loss of blood (bleeding).
- Confusion (or loss of awareness).
- Faster-than-normal breathing rate.
- Blotchy or bluish skin (especially around the mouth and lips).
- Nausea and/or vomiting.

### **First Aid Measures for Shock**

In the field, the first aid procedures administered for shock are identical to procedures that would be performed *to prevent shock*. When treating a casualty, assume that shock is present or will occur shortly. By waiting until actual signs and symptoms of shock are noticeable, the rescuer may jeopardize the casualty's life.

**a. Position the Casualty.** (DO NOT move the casualty or his limbs if suspected fractures have not been splinted).

- (1) Move the casualty to cover, if cover is available and the situation permits.
- (2) Lay the casualty on his back.

### **NOTE**

A casualty in shock from a chest wound or one who is experiencing breathing difficulty, may breathe easier in a sitting position. If this is the case, allow him to sit upright, but monitor carefully in case his condition worsens.

- (3) Elevate the casualty's feet higher than the level of his heart. Use a stable object (field pack or rolled up clothing) so that his feet will not slip off

### **WARNING**

**DO NOT** elevate legs if the casualty has an unsplinted broken leg, head injury, or abdominal injury.

### **WARNING**

**Check casualty for leg fracture(s) and splint, if necessary, before elevating his feet. For a casualty with an abdominal wound, place his knees in an upright (flexed) position.**

- (4) Loosen clothing at the neck, waist, or wherever it may be binding.
- (5) Prevent chilling or overheating. The key is to maintain body temperature. In cold weather, place a blanket or other like item over him to keep him warm and under

him to prevent chilling. In hot weather, place the casualty in the shade and protect him from becoming chilled; however, avoid the excessive use of blankets or other coverings.

(6) Calm the casualty. Throughout the entire procedure of providing first aid, the rescuer should reassure the casualty and keep him calm. This can be done by being authoritative (taking charge) and by showing self-confidence. Assure the casualty that you are there to help him.

(7) Seek medical aid.

**b. Food and/or Drink.** When providing first aid for shock, DO NOT give the casualty any food or drink. If you must leave the casualty or if he is unconscious, turn his head to the side to prevent him from choking if he vomits

**c. Evaluate Casualty.** Continue to evaluate the casualty until medical personnel arrives or the casualty is transported to an HOSPITAL.

## FIRST AID FOR SPECIFIC INJURIES

### General

Basic lifesaving steps apply to first aid measures for all injuries. Some wounds and burns will require special precautions and procedures when applying these measures. This chapter discusses specific first aid procedures for wounds of the head, face, and neck; chest and stomach wounds; and burns. It also discusses the techniques for applying dressings and bandages to specific parts of the body.

### Head, Neck, and Facial Injuries

#### Head Injuries.

(1) Head injuries range from minor abrasions or cuts on the scalp to severe brain injuries that may result in unconsciousness and sometimes death. Head injuries are classified as open or closed wounds.

- a. An open wound is one that is visible, has a break in the skin, and usually has evidence of bleeding.
- b. A closed wound may be visible (such as a depression in the skull) or the first aid provider may not be able to see any apparent injury (such as internal bleeding).

Some head injuries result in unconsciousness; however, a casualty may have a serious head wound and still be conscious. Casualties with head and neck injuries should be treated as though they also have a spinal injury. The casualty should not be moved until the head and neck is stabilized unless he is in immediate danger (such as close to a burning vehicle).

(2) Prompt first aid measures should be initiated for casualties with suspected head and neck injuries. The conscious casualty may be able to provide information on the extent of his injuries. However, as a result of the head injury, he may be confused and unable to provide accurate information. The signs and symptoms a first aid provider might observe are—

- Nausea and vomiting.
- Convulsions or twitches.
- Slurred speech.
- Confusion and loss of memory. (Does he know who he is? Does he know where he is? Does he know what day it is?)
- Recent unconsciousness.
- Dizziness.
- Drowsiness.
- Blurred vision, unequal pupils, or bruising (black eyes).
- Paralysis (partial or full).
- Complaint of headache.
- Bleeding or other fluid discharge from the scalp, nose, or ears.
- Deformity of the head (depression or swelling).

- Staggering while walking.

### **Neck Injuries.**

Neck injuries may result in heavy bleeding. Apply pressure above and below the injury, *but do not interfere with the breathing process*, and attempt to control the bleeding. Apply a dressing. Always evaluate the casualty for a possible neck fracture/spinal cord injury; if suspected, seek medical treatment immediately.

#### **NOTE**

Establish and maintain the airway in cases of facial or neck injuries. If a neck fracture or spinal cord injury is suspected, immobilize the injury and, if necessary, perform basic life support measures.

### **Facial Injuries.**

Soft tissue injuries of the face and scalp are common. Abrasions (scrapes) of the skin cause no serious problems. Contusions (injury without a break in the skin) usually cause swelling. A contusion of the scalp, looks and feels like a lump. Laceration (cut) and avulsion (torn away tissue) injuries are also common. Avulsions are frequently caused when a sharp blow separates the scalp from the skull beneath it. Because the face and scalp are richly supplied with blood vessels (arteries and veins), wounds of these areas usually bleed heavily.

### **General First Aid Measures**

**a. General Considerations.** The casualty with a head injury (or suspected head injury) should be continually monitored for the development of conditions that *may require* basic lifesaving measures. After initiating first aid measures, request medical assistance and evacuation. The first aid provider should not attempt to remove a protruding object from the head or give the casualty anything to eat or drink. Further, the first aid provider should be prepared to—

1. Clear the airway.
2. Control bleeding (external).
3. Administer first aid measures for shock.
4. Keep the casualty warm.
5. Protect the wound.

**b. Unconscious Casualty.** An unconscious casualty does not have control of all of his body's functions and may choke on his tongue, blood, vomitus, or other substances

**(1) Breathing.** The brain requires a constant supply of oxygen. A bluish (or in an individual with dark skin—greyish) colour of skin around the lips and nail beds indicates that the casualty is not receiving enough oxygen. Immediate action must be taken to clear the airway, to position the casualty on his side, or to initiate rescue breathing.

**(2) Bleeding.** Bleeding from a head injury usually comes from blood vessels within the scalp. Bleeding can also develop inside the skull or within the brain. In most instances visible bleeding from the head can be controlled by application of the field first aid dressing.

#### **CAUTION**

**DO NOT** attempt to put unnecessary pressure on the wound or attempt to push any brain matter back into the head (skull). **DO NOT apply a pressure dressing.**

**c. Concussion.** If an individual receives a heavy blow to the head or face, he may suffer a brain concussion (an injury to the brain that involves a temporary loss of some or all of the brain's ability to function). For example, the casualty may not breathe properly for a short period of time, or he may become confused and stagger when he attempts to walk. Symptoms of a concussion may only last for a short period of time. However, if a casualty is suspected of having suffered a concussion, he should be transported to an HOSPITAL as soon as conditions permit.

**d. Convulsions.** Convulsions (seizures/involuntary jerking) may occur even after a mild head injury. When a casualty is convulsing, protect him from hurting himself. Take the following measures:



- (1) Ease him to the ground if he is standing or sitting.
- (2) Support his head and neck.
- (3) Maintain his airway.
- (4) Protect him from further injury (such as hitting close-by objects).

#### NOTE

**DO NOT** forcefully hold the arms and legs if they are jerking because this can lead to broken bones. **DO NOT** force anything between the casualty's teeth—especially if they are tightly clenched because this may obstruct the casualty's airway. Maintain the casualty's airway if necessary.

**e. Brain Damage.** In *severe* head injuries where brain tissue is protruding, *leave the wound alone*; carefully place a loose moistened dressing (moistened with sterile normal saline if available) and also a first aid dressing over the tissue to protect it from further contamination. **DO NOT** remove or disturb any foreign matter that may be in the wound. Position the casualty so that his head is higher than his body. Keep him warm and *seek medical assistance immediately*.

#### NOTE

If there is an object extending from the wound, **DO NOT** remove the object. Improvise bulky dressings from the cleanest material available and place this material around the protruding object for support, then apply the field dressing.

### Chest Wounds

Blunt trauma, missile wounds, stab wounds, or falls may cause chest injuries. These injuries can be serious and may cause death quickly if first aid is not administered in a timely manner. A casualty with a chest injury may complain of pain in the chest or shoulder area; he may have difficulty breathing. His chest may not rise normally when he breathes. The injury may cause the casualty to cough up blood and to have a rapid or a weak heartbeat. A casualty with an open chest wound has a punctured chest wall. The sucking sound heard when he breathes is caused by air leaking into his chest cavity. This particular type of wound is dangerous and will collapse the injured lung. Breathing becomes difficult for the casualty because the wound is open. The casualty's life may depend upon how quickly you apply an occlusive dressing over the wound.

#### First Aid for Chest Wounds

- a. Evaluate the Casualty.** Be prepared to perform first aid measures. These measures may include clearing the airway, rescue breathing, treatment for shock, and/or bleeding control.
- b. Expose the Wound.** If appropriate, cut or remove the casualty's clothing to expose the wound. Remember, **DO NOT** remove clothing that is stuck to the wound because additional injury may result. **DO NOT** attempt to clean the wound.

#### NOTE

Examine the casualty to see if there is an entry and exit wound. If there are two wounds (entry, exit), perform the same procedure for both wounds. Treat the more serious (heavier bleeding, larger) wound first. It may be necessary to improvise a dressing for the second wound by using strips of cloth, such as a torn T-shirt, or whatever material is available. Also, listen for sucking sounds to determine if the chest wall is punctured.

#### CAUTION

If there is an object impaled in the wound, **DO NOT** remove it. Apply a dressing around the object and use additional improvised bulky materials/dressings (use the cleanest materials available) to build up the area around the object. Apply a supporting bandage over the bulky materials to hold them in place.

- c. Open the Field Dressing Plastic Wrapper.** In cases where there is a sucking chest wound, the plastic wrapper is used with the field dressing to create an occlusive dressing. If a plastic wrapper is not available, or if an additional wound needs to be treated;

cellophane, foil, the casualty's poncho, or similar material may be used. The covering should be wide enough to extend 2 inches or more beyond the edges of the wound in all directions.

- (1) Tear open one end of the plastic wrapper covering the field dressing. Be careful not to destroy the wrapper and **DO NOT** touch the inside of the wrapper.
- (2) Remove the inner packet (field dressing).
- (3) Complete tearing open the empty plastic wrapper using as much of the wrapper as possible to create a flat surface.

**d. Place the Wrapper Over the Wound.** Place the inside surface of the plastic wrapper directly over the wound *when the casualty exhales* and hold it in place. The casualty may hold the plastic wrapper in place if he is able.

**e. Apply the Dressing to the Wound.**

- (1) Use your free hand and shake open the field dressing
- (2) Place the white side of the dressing on the plastic wrapper covering the wound
- (3) Have the casualty breathe normally.
- (4) While maintaining pressure on the dressing, grasp one tail of the field dressing with the other hand and wrap it around the casualty's back. If tape is available, tape three sides of the plastic wrapper to the chest wall to provide occlusive type dressing. Leave one side untapped to provide emergency escape for air that may build up in the chest. If tape is not available, secure wrapper on three sides with field dressing leaving the fourth side as a flap.
- (5) Wrap the other tail in the opposite direction, bringing both tails over the dressing
- (6) Tie the tails into a square knot in the centre of the dressing *after* the casualty exhales and *before* he inhales. This will aid in maintaining pressure on the bandage after it has been tied. Tie the dressing firmly enough to secure the dressing without interfering with the casualty's breathing.

#### **NOTE**

When practical, apply direct manual pressure over the dressing for 5 to 10 minutes to help control the bleeding.

**f. Position the Casualty.** Position the casualty on his injured side or in a sitting position, whichever makes breathing easier

**g. Seek Medical Assistance.** Contact medical personnel.

#### **WARNING**

**If an occlusive dressing has been improperly placed, air may enter the chest cavity with no means of escape. This causes a life-threatening condition called *tension pneumothorax*. If the casualty's condition (for example, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, restlessness, or blueness/greyness of the skin) worsens after placing the dressing, quickly lift or remove, and then replace the occlusive dressing.**

### **Abdominal Wounds**

The most serious abdominal wound is one in which an object penetrates the abdominal wall and pierces internal organs or large blood vessels. In these instances, bleeding may be severe and death can occur rapidly.

#### **First Aid for Abdominal Wounds**

##### **a. Evaluate the Casualty.**

Be prepared to perform basic first aid measures. Always check for both entry and exit wounds. If there are two wounds (entry and exit), treat the wound that appears more serious first (for example, the heavier bleeding, protruding organs, larger wound, and so forth). It may be necessary to improvise dressings for the second wound by using strips of cloth, a T-shirt, or the cleanest material available.

##### **b. Position the Casualty.**

Place and maintain the casualty on his back with his knees in an upright (flexed) position. The knees up position helps relieve pain, assists in the treatment of shock, prevents further exposure of the bowel (intestines) or abdominal organs, and helps relieve abdominal pressure by allowing the abdominal muscles to relax.

**c. Expose the Wound.**

(1) Remove the casualty's loose clothing to expose the wound. However, **DO NOT** attempt to remove clothing that is stuck to the wound; removing it may cause further injury.

(2) Gently pick up any organs that may be on the ground. Do this with a clean, dry dressing or with the cleanest available material. Place the organs on top of the casualty's abdomen

**NOTE**

**DO NOT** probe, clean, or try to remove any foreign object from the abdomen. **DO NOT** touch with bare hands any exposed organs. **DO NOT** push organs back inside the body.

**d. Apply the Field Dressing.**

If the field dressing is not large enough to cover the entire wound, the plastic wrapper from the dressing may be used to cover the wound first (placing the field dressing on top). Open the plastic wrapper carefully without touching the inner surface. If necessary, other improvised dressings may be made from clothing, blankets, or the cleanest materials available.

**WARNING**

**If there is an object extending from the wound, DO NOT remove it. Place as much of the wrapper over the wound as possible without dislodging or moving the object. DO NOT place the wrapper over the object.**

- (1) Grasp the tails in both hands.
- (2) Hold the dressing with the white side down directly over the wound. **DO NOT** touch the white (sterile) side of the dressing or allow anything except the wound to come in contact with it.
- (3) Pull the dressing open and place it directly over the wound. If the casualty is able, he may hold the dressing in place.
- (4) Hold the dressing in place with one hand and use the other hand to wrap one of the tails around the body.
- (5) Wrap the other tail in the opposite direction until the dressing is completely covered. Leave enough of the tail for a knot.
- (6) Loosely tie the tails with a square knot at the casualty's side

**WARNING**

**When the dressing is applied, DO NOT put pressure on the wound or exposed internal parts, because pressure could cause further injury (vomiting, ruptured intestines, and so forth).**

**Therefore, tie the dressing ties (tails) loosely at casualty's side, not directly over the dressing.**

- (7) Tie the dressing firmly enough to prevent slipping without applying pressure to the wound site

Field dressings can be covered with improvised reinforcement material (cravats, strips of torn T-shirt, or other cloth) for additional support and protection. Tie improvised bandage on the opposite side of the dressing ties firmly enough to prevent slipping but without applying additional pressure to the wound.

**CAUTION**

**DO NOT** give casualties with abdominal wounds food or water (moistening the lips is allowed).

**e. Seek Medical Assistance.** Notify medical personnel.

**Burn Injuries**

Burns often cause extreme pain, scarring, or even death. Before administering first aid, you must be able to recognize the type of burn. There are four types of burns:

1. Thermal burns caused by fire, hot objects, hot liquids, and gases; or by nuclear blast or fireball.
2. Electrical burns caused by electrical wires, current, or lightning.
3. Chemical burns caused by contact with wet or dry chemicals or white phosphorus (WP)—from marking rounds and grenades.
4. Laser burns (eye [ocular] injury).

### **First Aid for Burns**

#### **a. Eliminate the Source of the Burn.**

The source of the burn must be eliminated before any evaluation of the casualty can occur and first aid administered.

(1) Quickly remove the casualty from danger and cover the *thermal burn* with any large non-synthetic material, such as a field jacket. If the casualty's clothing is still on fire, roll the casualty on the ground to smother (put out) the flames.

#### **CAUTION**

**Synthetic materials, such as nylon, may melt and cause further injury.**

(2) Remove the *electrical burn* casualty from the electrical source by turning off the electrical current. **DO NOT** attempt to turn off the electricity if the source is not close by. Speed is critical, so **DO NOT** waste unnecessary time. If the electricity cannot be turned off, wrap any *nonconductive* material (*dry rope, clothing, wood, and so forth*) around the casualty's back and shoulders and drag the casualty away from the electrical source **DO NOT** make body-to-body contact with the casualty or touch any wires because you could also become an electrical burn casualty.

#### **WARNING**

**High voltage electrical burns may cause temporary unconsciousness, difficulties in breathing, or difficulties with the heart (heartbeat).**

(3) Remove the *chemical* from the *burned casualty*. Remove *liquid* chemicals by flushing with as much water as possible. Remove *dry* chemicals by brushing off loose particles (**DO NOT** use the bare surface of your hand because you could become a chemical burn casualty) and then flush with large amounts of water, if available. If large amounts of water are not available, then **NO** water should be applied because small amounts of water applied to a dry chemical burn may cause a chemical reaction. When WP strikes the skin, smother with a wet cloth or mud. Keep WP covered with a wet material to exclude air; this should help prevent the particles from burning.

(4) Remove the *laser burn* casualty from the source. When removing the casualty from the laser beam source, be careful not to enter the beam or you may become a casualty. Never look directly at the beam source and if possible, wear appropriate eye protection.

#### **NOTE**

After the casualty is removed from the source of the burn, he should be evaluated for conditions requiring basic first aid measures.

**b. Expose the Burn.** Cut and gently lift away any clothing covering the burned area, without pulling clothing over the burns. Leave in place any clothing that is stuck to the burn. If the casualty's hands or wrists have been burned, remove jewellery if possible without causing further injury (rings, watches, and so forth) and place in his pockets. This prevents the necessity to cut off jewellery since swelling usually occurs as a result of a burn.

#### **CAUTION**

**DO NOT** attempt to decontaminate skin where blisters have formed.

#### **c. Apply a Field Dressing to the Burn.**

- (1) Grasp the tails of the casualty's dressing in both hands.
- (2) Hold the dressing directly over the wound with the white side down, pull the dressing open, and place it directly over the wound. **DO NOT** touch the white (sterile) side of the dressing or

allow anything except the wound to come in contact with it. If the casualty is able, he may hold the dressing in place.

- (3) Hold the dressing in place with one hand and use the other hand to wrap one of the tails around the limbs or the body.
- (4) Wrap the other tail in the opposite direction until the dressing is completely covered.
- (5) Tie the tails into a square knot over the outer edge of the dressing. The dressing should be applied lightly over the burn. Ensure that dressing is applied firmly enough to prevent it from slipping.

#### **NOTE**

Use the cleanest improvised dressing material available if a field dressing is not available or if it is not large enough for the entire wound.

#### **d. Take the Following Precautions:**

- **DO NOT** place the dressing over the face or genital area.
- **DO NOT** break the blisters.
- **DO NOT** apply grease or ointments to the burns.
- For electrical burns, check for both an entry and exit burn from the passage of electricity through the body. Exit burns may appear on any area of the body despite location of entry burn.
- For burns caused by wet or dry chemicals, flush the burns with large amounts of water and cover with a dry dressing.
- For burns caused by WP, flush the area with water, and then cover with a wet material, dressing, or mud to exclude the air and keep the WP particles from burning.
- For laser burns, apply a field dressing.
- If the casualty is conscious and not nauseated, give him small amounts of water.

#### **e. Seek Medical Assistance. Notify medical personnel.**

### **Dressings and Bandages**

#### **Head Wounds.**

##### **(1) Position the casualty.**

#### **WARNING**

**DO NOT move the casualty if you suspect he has sustained a neck, spine, or head injury (which produces any signs or symptoms other than minor bleeding).**

- If the casualty has a minor (superficial) scalp wound and is conscious:
- Have the casualty sit up (unless other injuries prohibit or he is unable to).
- If the casualty is lying down and is not accumulating fluids or drainage in his throat, elevate his head slightly.
- If the casualty is bleeding from or into his mouth or throat, turn his head to the side or position him on his side so that the airway will be clear. Avoid putting pressure on the wound and place him on his uninjured side
- If the casualty is unconscious or has a severe head injury, then suspect and treat him as having a potential neck or spinal injury, *immobilize and DO NOT move the casualty.*

#### **NOTE**

If the casualty is choking or vomiting or is bleeding from or into his mouth (thus compromising his airway), position him on his uninjured side to allow for drainage and to help keep his airway clear.

#### **WARNING**

**If it is necessary to turn a casualty with a suspected neck/spine injury; roll the casualty gently onto his side, keeping the head, neck, and body aligned while providing support for the head and neck. DO NOT roll the casualty by yourself but seek assistance. Move him only if absolutely necessary, otherwise keep the casualty immobilized to prevent further damage to the neck/spine.**

##### **(2) Expose the wound.**

Remove the casualty's helmet (if necessary). What items of protective equipment can be removed is dependent upon the casualty's injuries (where on the body and what type).

**WARNING**

**DO NOT attempt to clean the wound or remove a protruding object.**

**(3) Apply a dressing to a wound of the forehead or back of head.**

To apply a dressing to a wound of the forehead or back of the head—

- (a) Remove the dressing from the wrapper.
- (b) Grasp the tails of the dressing in both hands.
- (c) Hold the dressing (white side down) directly over the wound. **DO NOT** touch the white (sterile) side of the dressing or allow anything except the wound to come in contact with it.
- (d) Place it directly over the wound.
- (e) Hold it in place with one hand. If the casualty is able, he may assist.
- (f) Wrap the first tail horizontally around the head; ensure the tail covers the dressing.
- (g) Hold the first tail in place and wrap the second tail in the opposite direction, covering the dressing
- (h) Tie a square knot and secure the tails at the side of the head, making sure they **DO NOT** cover the eyes or ears

**(4) Apply a dressing to a wound on top of the head.**

To apply a dressing to a wound on top of the head—

- a. Remove the dressing from the wrapper.
- b. Grasp the tails of the dressing in both hands.
- c. Hold it (white side down) directly over the wound.

**DO NOT** touch the white (sterile) side of the dressing or allow anything except the wound to come in contact with it.

- d. Place it over the wound
- e. Hold it in place with one hand. If the casualty is able, he may assist.
- f. Wrap one tail down under the chin up in front of the ear, over the dressing, and in front of the other ear.

**WARNING**

**Ensure the tails remain wide and close to the front of the chin to avoid choking the casualty.**

- g. Wrap the remaining tail under the chin in the opposite direction and up the side of the face to meet the first tail
- h. Cross the tails, bringing one around the forehead (above the eyebrows) and the other around the back of the head (at the base of the skull) to a point just above and in front of the opposite ear, and tie them using a square

**(5) Apply a triangular bandage to the head.**

To apply a triangular bandage to the head—

- (a) Turn the base (longest side) of the bandage up and center its base on the center of the forehead, letting the point (apex) fall on the back of the neck.
- (b) Take the ends behind the head and cross the ends over the apex.
- (c) Take them over the forehead and tie them
- (d) Tuck the apex behind the crossed part of the bandage or secure it with a safety pin, if available

**(6) Apply a cravat bandage to the head.**

To apply a cravat bandage to the head—

- (a) Place the middle of the bandage over the dressing
- (b) Cross the two ends of the bandage in opposite directions completely around the head
- (c) Tie the ends over the dressing.

### ***Eye Injuries.***

The eye is a vital sensory organ, and blindness is a severe physical handicap. Timely first aid of the eye may relieve pain and may also help to prevent shock, permanent eye injury, and possible loss of vision. Because the eye is very sensitive, any injury can be easily aggravated if it is improperly handled. Injuries of the eye may be quite severe. Cuts of the eyelids can appear to be very serious, but if the eyeball is not involved, a person's vision usually will not be damaged. However, lacerations (cuts) of the eyeball can cause permanent damage or loss of sight.

#### **(1) *Lacerated/torn eyelids.***

Lacerated eyelids may bleed heavily, but bleeding usually stops quickly. Cover the injured eye with a sterile dressing. **DO NOT** put pressure on the wound because you may injure the eyeball. Handle torn eyelids very carefully to prevent further injury. Place any detached pieces of the eyelid on a clean bandage or dressing and immediately send them with the casualty to the medical facility.

#### **(2) *Lacerated eyeball (injury to the globe).***

Lacerations or cuts to the eyeball may cause serious and permanent eye damage. Cover the injury with a loose sterile dressing. **DO NOT** put pressure on the eyeball because additional damage may occur. An important point to remember is that when one eyeball is injured, you should immobilize both eyes. This is done by applying a bandage to both eyes. Because the eyes move together, covering both will lessen the chances of further damage to the injured eye. (However, in hazardous surroundings, leave uninjured eye uncovered to enable casualty to see.)

#### **CAUTION**

**DO NOT** apply pressure when there is a possible laceration of the eyeball. The eyeball contains fluid. Pressure applied over the eye will force the fluid out, resulting in permanent injury. **APPLY PROTECTIVE DRESSING WITHOUT ADDED PRESSURE.**

#### **(3) *Extruded eyeballs.***

Adventurers may encounter casualties with severe eye injuries that include an extruded eyeball (eyeball out-of-socket). In such instances you should gently cover the extruded eye with a loose moistened dressing and also cover the unaffected eye. **DO NOT** bind or exert pressure on the injured eye while applying the dressing. Keep the casualty quiet, place him on his back, treat for shock, and evacuate him immediately.

#### **(4) *Burns of the eyes.***

Chemical burns, thermal (heat) burns, and light burns can affect the eyes.

**(a) *Chemical burns.*** Injuries from chemical burns require immediate first aid. Mainly acids or alkalise cause chemical burns. The first aid measures consist of flushing the eyes immediately with large amounts of water for at least 5 to 20 minutes, or as long as necessary to flush out the chemical and, once flushed, bandaging the eyes. If the burn is an acid burn, you should flush the eye for at least 5 to 10 minutes. If the burn is an alkali burn, you should flush the eye for at least 20 minutes. After the eye has been flushed evacuate the casualty immediately.

**(b) *Thermal burns.*** When an individual suffers burns of the face from a fire, the eyes will close quickly due to extreme heat. This reaction is a natural reflex to protect the eyeballs; however, the eyelids remain exposed and are frequently burned. If a casualty receives burns of the eyelids or face—

- **DO NOT** apply a dressing.
- **DO NOT** touch.
- **SEEK** medical assistance immediately.

**(c) *Light burns.*** Exposure to intense light can burn an individual. Infrared rays, eclipse light (if the casualty has looked directly at the sun), or laser burns cause injuries of the exposed eyeball. Ultraviolet rays from arc welding can cause a superficial burn to the surface of the eye. These injuries are generally not painful but may cause permanent damage to the eyes.

Immediate first aid is usually not required. Loosely bandaging the eyes may make the casualty more comfortable and protect his eyes from further injury caused by exposure to other bright lights or sunlight.

#### **CAUTION**

With impaled objects or significant sized foreign bodies, both eyes are usually bandaged to help secure the foreign body in the injured eye. In a battlefield environment, leave the uninjured eye uncovered so that the casualty can see.

#### ***Side-of-Head or Cheek Wound.***

Facial injuries to the side of the head or the cheek may bleed profusely. Prompt action is necessary to ensure that the airway remains open and also to control the bleeding. It may be necessary to apply a dressing. To apply a dressing—

- (1) Remove the dressing from its wrapper.
- (2) Grasp the tails in both hands.
- (3) Hold the dressing directly over the wound with the white side down and place it directly on the wound. **DO NOT** touch the white (sterile) side of the dressing or allow anything except the wound to come in contact with it.
- (4) Hold the dressing in place with one hand (the casualty may assist if able). Wrap the top tail over the top of the head and bring it down in front of the ear (on the side opposite the wound), under the chin and up over the dressing to a point just above the ear (on the wound side).

#### **NOTE**

When possible, avoid covering the casualty's ear with the dressing, as this will decrease his ability to hear.

- (5) Bring the second tail under the chin, up in front of the ear (on the side opposite the wound), and over the head to meet the other tail (on the wounded side)
- (6) Cross the two tails (on the wound side) and bring one end across the forehead (above the eyebrows) to a point just in front of the opposite ear (on the uninjured side).
- (7) Wrap the other tail around the back of the head (at the base of the skull), and tie the two ends just in front of the ear on the uninjured side with a square knot

#### ***Ear Injuries.***

Lacerated (cut) or avulsed (torn) ear tissue may not, in itself, be a serious injury. Bleeding, or the drainage of fluids from the ear canal, however, may be a sign of a head injury, such as a skull fracture.

**DO NOT** attempt to stop the flow from the inner ear canal nor put anything into the ear canal to block it. Instead, you should cover the ear lightly with a dressing. For minor cuts or wounds to the external ear, apply a cravat bandage as follows:

- (1) Place the middle of the bandage over the ear.
- (2) Cross the ends, wrap them in opposite directions around the head, and tie them
- (3) If possible, place some dressing material between the back of the ear and the side of the head to avoid crushing the ear against the head with the bandage.

#### ***Nose Injuries.***

Nose injuries generally produce bleeding. The bleeding may be controlled by placing an ice pack (if available) over the nose, or pinching the nostrils together. The bleeding may also be controlled by placing torn gauze (rolled) between the upper teeth and the lip.

#### **CAUTION**

**DO NOT** attempt to remove objects inhaled into the nose. An untrained person who removes such an object could worsen the casualty's condition and cause permanent injury.



### **Jaw Injuries.**

Before applying a bandage to a casualty's jaw, remove all loose or free-floating foreign material from the casualty's mouth. If the casualty is unconscious, check for obstructions in the airway and remove if possible. If there is profuse bleeding in the oral cavity, the cavity may require loose packing with soft bandaging material (for example: Kerlix™ gauze) prior to applying a bandage. Care should be taken to avoid occluding the airway. When applying the bandage, allow the jaw enough freedom to permit passage of air and drainage from the mouth.

- (1) *Apply bandages attached to field first aid dressing to the jaw.* After dressing the wound, apply the bandages using the same technique

#### **NOTE**

The dressing and bandaging procedure outlined for the jaw serves a twofold purpose. In addition to stopping the bleeding and protecting the wound, it also immobilizes a fractured jaw.

- (2) *Apply a cravat bandage to the jaw.*
  - (a) Place the bandage under the chin and pull its ends upward. Adjust the bandage to make one end longer than the other
  - (b) Take the longer end over the top of the head to meet the short end at the temple and cross the ends over
  - (c) Take the ends in opposite directions to the other side of the head and tie them over the part of the bandage that was applied

#### **NOTE**

The cravat bandage technique is used to immobilize a fractured jaw or to maintain a sterile dressing that does not have tail bandages attached.

### **Shoulder Bandage**

#### **To apply bandages attached to the field first aid dressing—**

- (1) Take one bandage across the chest and the other across the back and under the arm opposite the injured shoulder.
- (2) Tie the ends with a square knot.

#### **To apply a cravat bandage to the shoulder or armpit—**

- (1) Make an extended cravat bandage by using two triangular bandages (Figure 3-34A); place the end of the first triangular bandage along the base of the second one
- (2) Fold the two bandages into a single extended bandage
- (3) Fold the extended bandage into a single cravat bandage. After folding, secure the thicker part (overlap) with two or more safety pins
- (4) Place the middle of the cravat bandage under the armpit so that the front end is longer than the back end and safety pins are on the outside
- (5) Cross the ends on top of the shoulder
- (6) Take one of the bandage ends across the back and under the arm on the opposite side and the other end across the chest. Tie the ends. Be sure to place sufficient wadding in the armpit. **DO NOT** tie the cravat bandage too tightly. Avoid compressing the major blood vessels in the armpit.

### **Elbow Bandage**

#### **To apply a cravat bandage to the elbow—**

- a. Bend the arm at the elbow and place the middle of the cravat at the point of the elbow bringing the ends upward
- b. Bring the ends across, extending both downward
- c. Take both ends around the arm and tie them with a square knot at the front of the elbow

#### **CAUTION**

If an elbow fracture is suspected, **DO NOT** bend the elbow; bandage it in the position found.

### **Hand Bandage**

### **To apply a triangular bandage to the hand—**

- (1) Place the hand in the middle of the triangular bandage with the wrist at the base of the bandage. Ensure that the fingers are separated with absorbent material to prevent chafing and irritation of the skin.
- (2) Place the apex over the fingers and tuck any excess material into the pleats on each side of the hand.
- (3) Cross the ends on top of the hand, take them around the wrist, and tie them with a square knot.

### **To apply a cravat bandage to the palm of the hand—**

- (1) Lay the middle of the cravat over the palm of the hand with the ends hanging down on each side.
- (2) Take the end of the cravat at the little finger across the back of the hand, extending it upward over the base of the thumb; then bring it downward across the palm.
- (3) Take the thumb end across the back of the hand, over the palm, and through the hollow between the thumb and palm.
- (4) Take the ends to the back of the hand and cross them; then bring them up over the wrist and cross them again.
- (5) Bring both ends down and tie them with a square knot on top of the wrist.

### **Leg (Upper and Lower) Bandage**

#### **To apply a cravat bandage to the leg—**

- a. Place the centre of the cravat over the dressing.
- b. Take one end around and up the leg in a spiral motion and the other end around and down the leg in a spiral motion, overlapping part of each preceding turn.
- c. Bring both ends together and tie them with a square knot.

### **Knee Bandage**

To apply a cravat bandage to the knee use the same technique applied in bandaging the elbow.

#### **CAUTION**

If a fracture of the kneecap is suspected, **DO NOT** bend the knee; bandage it in the position found.

### **Foot Bandage**

#### **To apply a triangular bandage to the foot—**

- a. Place the foot in the middle of the triangular bandage with the heel well forward of the base. Ensure that the toes are separated by absorbent material to prevent chafing and irritation of the skin.
- b. Place the apex over the top of the foot and tuck any excess material into the pleats on each side of the foot.
- c. Cross the ends on top of the foot, take them around the ankle, and tie them at the front of the ankle.

## **FIRST AID FOR FRACTURES**

### **General**

A fracture is any break in the continuity of a bone. Fractures can cause total disability or in some cases death by severing vital organs and/or arteries. On the other hand, they can most often be treated so there is a complete recovery. The potential for recovery depends greatly upon the first aid the individual receives before he is moved. First aid includes immobilizing the fractured part in addition to applying lifesaving measures when necessary. The basic splinting principle is to immobilize the joints above and below the fracture.

### **Kinds of Fractures**

### **a. Closed Fracture.**

A closed fracture is a broken bone that does not break the overlying skin. The tissue beneath the skin may be damaged. A *dislocation* is when a joint, such as a knee, ankle, or shoulder, is not in the proper position. A *sprain* is when the connecting tissues of the joints have been torn. Dislocations and sprains (swelling, possible deformity, and discoloration) should be treated as closed fractures.

### **b. Open Fracture**

An open fracture is a broken bone that breaks (pierces) the overlying skin. The broken bone may come through the skin or a missile such as a bullet or shell fragment may go through the flesh and break the bone.

### **NOTE**

An open fracture is contaminated and subject to infection.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Fractures**

Indications of a fracture are deformity, tenderness, swelling, pain, inability to move the injured part, protruding bone, bleeding, or discolored skin at the injury site. A sharp pain when the adventurer attempts to move the part is also a sign of a fracture.

### **WARNING**

**DO NOT encourage the casualty to move the injured part in order to identify a fracture since such movement could cause further damage to surrounding tissues and promote shock. If you are not sure whether a bone is fractured, care for the injury as a fracture. At the site of the fracture, the bone ends are sharp and could cause vessel (artery and/or vein) damage.**

## **Purposes of Immobilizing Fractures**

A fracture is immobilized to prevent the sharp edges of the bone from moving and cutting tissue, muscle, blood vessels, and nerves. This reduces pain and helps prevent or control shock. In a closed fracture, immobilization keeps bone fragments from causing an open wound, which can become contaminated and subject to infection.

## **Splints, Padding, Bandages, Slings, and Swathes**

**a. Splints.** Splints may be improvised from such items as boards, poles, sticks, tree limbs, or cardboard. If nothing is available for a splint, the chest wall can be used to immobilize a fractured arm and the uninjured leg can be used to immobilize (to some extent) the fractured leg.

**b. Padding.** Padding may be improvised from such items as a jacket, blanket, poncho, shelter half, or leafy vegetation.

**c. Bandages.** Bandages may be improvised from belts, rifle slings, kerchiefs, or strips torn from clothing or blankets. Narrow materials such as wire or cord should not be used to secure a splint in place. The application of wire and/or narrow material to an extremity could cause tissue damage and a tourniquet effect.

**d. Slings.** A sling is a bandage suspended from the neck to support an upper extremity. If a bandage is not available, a sling can be improvised by using the tail of a coat or shirt or pieces of cloth torn from such items as clothing and blankets. The triangular bandage is ideal for this purpose.

Remember that the casualty's hand should be higher than his elbow, and the fingers should be showing at all times. The sling should be applied so that the supporting pressure is on the uninjured side.

**e. Swathes.** Swathes are any bands (pieces of cloth or load bearing equipment [LBE]) that are used to further immobilize a splinted fracture. Triangular and cravat bandages are often used and are called *swathe bandages*. The purpose of the swathe is to immobilize; therefore, the swathe bandage is placed above and/or below the fracture—not over it.

## **Procedures for Splinting Suspected Fractures**

Before beginning first aid procedures for a fracture, gather whatever splinting materials are available. Ensure that splints are long enough to immobilize the joint above and below the suspected fracture. If possible, use at least four ties (two above and two below the fracture) to secure the splints. The ties should be square knots and should be tied away from the body on the splint. Distal pulses of the affected extremity should be checked before and after the application of the splint.

**a. Evaluate the Casualty.** Be prepared to perform any necessary lifesaving measures. Monitor the casualty for development of conditions that may require you to perform necessary lifesaving measures.

**WARNING**

**Unless there is immediate life-threatening danger, such as a fire or an explosion, DO NOT move the casualty with a suspected back or neck injury. Improper movement may cause permanent paralysis or death.**

**b. Locate the Site of the Suspected Fracture.**

(1) Ask the casualty for the location of the injury.

1. Does he have any pain?
2. Where is it tender?
3. Can he move the extremity?

**NOTE**

With the presence of an obvious deformity, do not make the casualty move extremity.

1. Look for an unnatural position of the extremity.
2. Look for a bone sticking out (protruding).

**c. Prepare the Casualty for Splinting the Suspected Fracture.**

- (1) Reassure the casualty. Tell him that you will be providing first aid for him and that medical help is on the way.
- (2) Loosen any tight or binding clothing.
- (3) Remove all jewelry from the injured part and place it in the casualty's pocket. Tell the casualty you are doing this because if the jewelry is not removed and swelling occurs later, he may not be able to get it off and further bodily injury could result.
- (4) Boots should not be removed from the casualty unless they are needed to stabilize a neck injury or there is actual bleeding from the foot.

**d. Gather Splinting Materials.** If standard splinting materials (splints, padding, and cravats) are not available, gather improvised materials. If splinting material is not available and the suspected fracture **CANNOT** be splinted, then swathes, or a combination of swathes and slings can be used to immobilize the extremity.

**e. Pad the Splints.** Pad the splints where they touch any bony part of the body, such as the elbow, wrist, knee, ankle, crotch, or armpit areas. Padding prevents excessive pressure on the area, which could lead to circulation problems.

**f. Check the Circulation Below the Site of the Injury.**

- (1) Note any pale, white, or bluish-gray color of the skin, which may indicate impaired circulation. Circulation can also be checked by depressing the toe or fingernail beds and observing how quickly the color returns. A slower return of color to the injured side when compared with the uninjured side indicates a problem with circulation. The fingernail bed is the method to use to check the circulation in a dark-skinned casualty.
- (2) Check the temperature of the injured extremity. Use your hand to compare the temperature of the injured side with the uninjured side. The body area below the injury may be colder to the touch indicating poor circulation.

- (3) Question the casualty about the presence of numbness, tightness, cold, or tingling sensations.

**WARNING**

Casualties with fractures of the extremities may show impaired circulation, such as numbness, tingling, cold or pale to bluish skin tone. These casualties should be evacuated by medical personnel and treated as soon as possible. Prompt medical treatment may prevent possible loss of the limb.

**WARNING**

If it is an open fracture and the bone is protruding from the skin, **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO PUSH THE BONE BACK UNDER THE SKIN**. Apply a field dressing over the wound to protect the area.

**g. Apply the Splint in Place.**

1. Splint the fracture in the position found. **DO NOT** attempt to reposition or straighten the injury. If it is an open fracture, stop the bleeding and protect the wound. Cover all wounds with field dressings before applying a splint. Remember to use the casualty's field dressing, not your own.
2. Place one splint on each side of the fracture. Make sure that the splints reach, if possible, beyond the joints above and below the fracture.
3. Tie the splints. Secure each splint in place above and below the fracture site with improvised (or actual) cravats. Improvised cravats, such as strips of cloth, belts, or whatever else you have, may be used. With minimal motion to the injured areas, place and tie the splints with the bandages. Push cravats through and under the natural body curvatures, and then gently position improvised cravats and tie in place. Use square knots. Tie all knots on the splint away from the casualty **DO NOT** tie cravats directly over the suspected fracture site.

**h. Check the Splint for Tightness.**

- a. **CHECK** to be sure that bandages are tight enough to securely hold splinting materials in place, but not so tight that circulation is impaired.
- b. **RECHECK** the circulation after application of the splint. Check the skin colour and temperature. This is to ensure that the bandages holding the splint in place have not been tied too tightly. A fingertip check can be made by inserting the tip of the finger between the bandaged knot and the skin.
- c. **MAKE** any necessary adjustment without allowing the splint to become ineffective.

**i. Apply a Sling.** An improvised sling may be made from any available non stretching piece of cloth, such as a shirt or trousers, poncho, or shelter half. Slings may also be improvised using the tail of a coat, belt, or a piece of cloth. A trousers belt may also be used for support. A sling should place the supporting pressure on the casualty's uninjured side. The supported arm should have the hand positioned slightly higher than the elbow showing the fingers.

- (1) Insert the splinted arm in the centre of the sling
- (2) Bring the ends of the sling up and tie them at the side (or hollow) of the neck on the uninjured side
- (3) Twist and tuck the corner of the sling at the elbow. *Apply a Swathe.* You may use any large piece of cloth, adventurer's belt, to improvise a swathe.

**WARNING**

The swathe should not be placed directly on top of the injury, but positioned either above or below the fracture site.

- Apply swathes to the injured arm by wrapping the swathe over the injured arm, around the casualty's back, and under the arm on the uninjured side. Tie the ends on the uninjured side

- A swathe is applied to an injured leg by wrapping the swathe around both legs and securing it on the uninjured side.

**k. Seek Medical Assistance.** Notify medical personnel, watch closely for development of life-threatening conditions and/or impaired circulation to the injured extremity.

### **Jaw, Collarbone, and Shoulder Fractures**

a. Apply a cravat to immobilize a fractured jaw. Direct all bandaging support to the top of the casualty's head, not to the back of his neck. If incorrectly placed, the bandage will pull the casualty's jaw back and interfere with his breathing.

#### **WARNING**

**Casualties with lower jaw (mandible) fractures cannot be laid flat on their backs because facial muscles will relax and may cause an airway obstruction.**

b. Apply two belts, a sling, and a cravat to immobilize a fractured collarbone.

c. Apply a sling and a cravat to immobilize a fractured or dislocated shoulder

### **Spinal Column Fractures**

It is often impossible to be sure a casualty has a fractured spinal column. Be suspicious of any back injury, especially if the casualty has fallen or if his back has been sharply struck or bent. If a casualty has received such an injury and does not have feeling in his legs or cannot move them, you can be reasonably sure that he has a severe back injury, which should be managed as a fracture.

Remember, that the possibility of a neck fracture or injury to the back should always be suspected, and it is often impossible to be sure if a casualty has a fractured spinal column. If the spine is fractured, bending it can cause the sharp bone fragments to bruise or cut the spinal cord and result in permanent paralysis or death. The spinal column must maintain normal spinal position at the lower back (lumbar region) to help remove pressure from the spinal cord.

If the casualty is not to be transported until medical personnel arrive—

- Caution him not to move. Ask him if he is in pain or if he is unable to move any part of his body.
- Leave him in the position in which he is found. **DO NOT** move any part of his body, unless he is in imminent danger.
- If the casualty is lying face up, slip a blanket or other supporting material under the arch of his lower back to help support the spine in a normal position. Take care not to place so much bulky padding as to cause potential damage by causing undue pressure on the spine. If he is lying face down, **DO NOT** put anything under any part of his body.

If the casualty must be transported to a safe location before medical personnel arrive and if the casualty is in a—

- Face-up position, transport him by stretcher or use a firm substitute, such as a wide board or a door longer than his height. Loosely tie the casualty's wrists together over his waistline, using a cravat or a strip of cloth. Tie his feet together to prevent the accidental dropping or shifting of his legs. Lay a folded blanket across the stretcher where the arch of his back is to be placed. Using a four-man team place the casualty on the stretcher without bending his spinal column or his neck.
- The number two man positions himself at the casualty's head. His responsibility is to provide manual in-line (neutral) stabilization of the head and neck. The number three, and four men position themselves on one side of the casualty; all kneel on one knee along the side of the casualty. The number one man positions himself to the opposite side of the casualty (or can be on the same side of number three and four). The numbers two, three, and four men gently place their hands under the casualty. The number one man on the opposite side places his hands under the injured part to assist.

- When all four men are in position to lift, the number two man commands, “**PREPARE TO LIFT**” and then, “**LIFT.**” All men, in unison, gently lift the casualty about 8 inches. Once the casualty is lifted, the number one man recovers and slides the stretcher under the casualty, ensuring that the blanket is in proper position. The number one man then returns to his original lift position.
- When the number two man commands, “**LOWER CASUALTY,**” all men, in unison, gently lower the casualty onto the stretcher.
- Facedown position, he must be transported in this same position. The four-man team lifts him onto a regular or improvised stretcher, keeping the spinal column in a normal spinal position. If a regular stretcher is used, first place a folded blanket on the stretcher at the point where the chest will be placed.

### **Neck Fractures**

A fractured neck is extremely dangerous. Bone fragments may bruise or cut the spinal cord just as they might in a fractured back.

#### **If the casualty is not to be transported until medical personnel arrive—**

- Caution him not to move. Moving may cause permanent injury or death.
- Leave the casualty in the position in which he is found. If his neck and head (cervical spine) are in an abnormal position, immediately immobilize the neck and head.
- Keep his head still, if the casualty is lying face up, raise his shoulders slightly, and slip a roll of cloth that has the bulk of a bath towel under his neck. The roll should be thick enough to arch his neck only slightly, leaving the back of his head on the ground. **DO NOT** bend his neck or head forward. **DO NOT** raise or twist his head. Immobilize the casualty’s head. Do this by padding heavy objects (such as rocks or his boots filled with dirt, sand, gravel, or rock) and placing them on each side of his head. If it is necessary to use boots, after filling them, tie the top tightly or stuff with pieces of cloth to secure the contents.)
- **DO NOT** move him if the casualty is lying face down. Immobilize the head and neck by padding heavy objects and placing them on each side of his head. **DO NOT** put a roll of cloth under the neck. **DO NOT** bend the neck or head, nor roll the casualty onto his back.

#### **If the casualty must be prepared for transportation before medical personnel arrive—**

- If the casualty has a fractured neck, at least two persons are needed because the casualty’s head and trunk must be moved in unison. The two persons must work in close coordination to avoid bending of the neck.
- A wide board is placed lengthwise beside the casualty. It should extend at least 4 inches beyond the casualty’s head and feet
- If the casualty is lying face up, the number one man steadies the casualty’s head and neck between his hands. At the same time, the number two man positions one foot and one knee against the board to prevent it from slipping. He then grasps the casualty underneath his shoulder and hip and gently slides him onto the board
- If the casualty is lying face down, the number one man steadies the casualty’s head and neck between his hands, while the number two man gently rolls the casualty over onto the board
- The number one man continues to steady the casualty’s head and neck. The number two man simultaneously raises the casualty’s shoulders slightly, places padding under his neck, and immobilizes the casualty’s head
- Any improvised supports are secured in position with a cravat or strip of cloth extended across the casualty’s forehead and under the board

## **FIRST AID FOR CLIMATIC INJURIES**

### **General**

It is desirable, but not always possible, for an individual’s body to become adjusted (acclimated) to an environment.

(1) The adventurer's physical condition determines the amount of time their bodies need to adjust to the environment. Even those individuals in good physical condition need time before working or training in extremes of hot or cold weather. Climate-related injuries are usually preventable; prevention is both an individual and leadership responsibility.

(2) Several factors contribute to health and well-being in any environment—

1. Diet.
2. Sleep and rest.
3. Exercise.
4. Suitable clothing.

(3) Diet should be suited to an individual's needs in a particular climate. A special diet started for any purpose (such as weight reduction) should be done with appropriate medical supervision.

#### **WARNING**

**Adventurers should use extreme caution when starting fad diets or taking over-the-counter herbal supplements. Medical records revealed that deaths and severe injuries occurred in individuals using dietary/ herbal supplements without medical monitoring.**

#### **NOTE**

Weight loss and the use of weight loss supplements should be supervised by a trained health care provider.

(4) Specialized clothing and equipment (such as cold weather gear) for a specific environment should be obtained and used properly.

#### **Heat Injuries**

a. Heat injuries are environmental injuries. They may result when a adventurer—

- Is exposed to extreme heat, such as from the sun or from high temperatures.
- Does not wear proper clothing.
- Is inside closed spaces, such as inside an vehicle.

b. Heat injury can be divided into three categories: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heatstroke.

#### **WARNING**

**The heat casualty should be continually monitored for development of conditions which may require the performance of necessary basic lifesaving measures.**

#### **CAUTION**

Do not use salt solutions in first aid procedures for heat injuries.

**(1) Check the casualty for signs and symptoms of *cramping*.**

***Signs and symptoms.*** Cramping is caused by an imbalance of chemicals (called electrolytes) in the body as a result of excessive sweating. This condition causes the casualty to exhibit:

- Cramping in the extremities (arms and legs).
- Abdominal (stomach) cramps.
- Excessive sweating.

#### **NOTE**

Thirst may or may not occur. Cramping can occur without the adventurer being thirsty.

- *First aid measures.*
- Move the casualty to a cool, shady area or improvise shade if none is available.
- Loosen his clothing.
- Have him slowly drink at least one canteen full of water. (The body absorbs cool water faster than warm or cold water; therefore, cool water is preferred if it is available.)
- Seek medical assistance should cramps continue.

**(2) Check the casualty for signs and symptoms of *heat exhaustion*.**

***Signs and symptoms.*** Heat exhaustion is caused by loss of body fluids (dehydration) through sweating without adequate fluid replacement. It can occur in an otherwise fit individual who is



involved in physical exertion in any hot environment especially if the adventurer is not acclimatized to that environment. These signs and symptoms are—

1. Excessive sweating with pale, moist, cool skin.
2. Headache.
3. Weakness.
4. Dizziness.
5. Loss of appetite.
6. Cramping.
7. Nausea (with or without vomiting).
8. Urge to defecate.
9. Chills (gooseflesh).
10. Rapid breathing.
11. Tingling of hands and/or feet.
12. Confusion.
13. *First aid measures.*
14. Move the casualty to a cool, shady area or improvise shade if none is available.
15. Loosen or remove his clothing and boots (unless in a chemical environment); pour water on him and fan him.
16. Have him slowly drink at least one canteen of water.
17. Elevate his legs.
18. If possible, the casualty should not participate in strenuous activity for the remainder of the day.
19. Monitor the casualty until the symptoms are gone, or medical assistance arrives.

**(3) Check the casualty for signs and symptoms of *heatstroke*.**

**Heatstroke is a medical emergency which may result in death if care is delayed.**

***Signs and symptoms.*** A adventurer suffering from heatstroke has been exposed to high temperatures (such as direct sunlight) or been dressed in protective overgarments, which causes the body temperature to rise. Heatstroke occurs more rapidly in adventurers who are engaged in work or other physical activity in a high heat environment. Heatstroke is caused by a failure of the body's cooling mechanism which includes a decrease in the body's ability to produce sweat. The casualty's skin is red (flushed), hot, and dry. He may experience weakness, dizziness, confusion, headaches, seizures, nausea, stomach pains or cramps, and his respiration and pulse may be rapid and weak. Unconsciousness and collapse may occur suddenly.

***First aid measures.*** Cool casualty immediately by—

1. Moving him to a cool, shady area or improvising shade if none is available.
2. Loosening or removing his clothing (except in a chemical environment).
3. Spraying or pouring water on him; fanning him to permit the coolant effect of evaporation.
4. Massaging his extremities and skin, which increases the blood flow to those body areas, thus aiding the cooling process?
5. Elevating his legs.
6. Having him slowly drink at least one canteen full of water if he is conscious.

**NOTE**

Start cooling casualty immediately. Continue cooling while awaiting transportation and during transport to an HOSPITAL.

***Medical assistance.*** Seek medical assistance because the casualty should be transported to an HOSPITAL as soon as possible. Do not interrupt the cooling process or lifesaving measures to seek help; if someone else is present send them for help. The casualty should be continually monitored

for development of conditions that may require the performance of necessary basic lifesaving measures.

### **Cold Injuries**

Cold injuries are most likely to occur when conditions are moderately cold, but accompanied by wet or windy conditions. Cold injuries can usually be prevented. Well-disciplined and well-trained adventurers can be protected even in the most adverse circumstances. They and their leaders must know the hazards of exposure to the cold. They must know the importance of personal hygiene, exercise, care of the feet and hands, and the use of protective clothing.

#### ***Contributing Factors.***

**(1)** Temperature, humidity, precipitation, and wind greatly increase likelihood of cold injuries, and the adventurers with wet clothing are at great risk of cold injuries. Riverine operations (river, swamp, and stream crossings) increase likelihood of cold injuries. Low temperatures and low relative humidity (dry cold) promote frostbite. Higher temperatures, together with moisture, promote immersion syndrome. Windchill accelerates the loss of body heat and may aggravate cold injuries.

**(2)** Relatively stationary activities such as being in an observation post or on guard duty increase the adventurer's vulnerability to cold injury. Also, a adventurer is more likely to receive a cold injury if he is—

- In contact with the ground (such as marching, performing guard duty, or engaging in other outside activities).
- Immobile for long periods (such as while riding in an unheated or open vehicle).
- Standing in water, such as in a foxhole.
- Out in the cold for days without being warmed.
- Deprived of an adequate diet and rest.
- Not able to take care of his personal hygiene.

**(3)** Physical fatigue contributes to apathy, which leads to inactivity, personal neglect, carelessness, and reduced heat production. In turn, these increase the risk of cold injury. Adventurers with prior cold injuries have a higher-than-normal risk of subsequent cold injury; not necessarily involving the body part previously injured.

**(4)** Depressed or unresponsive adventurers are also vulnerable because they are less active. These adventurers tend to be careless about precautionary measures, especially warming activities, when cold injury is a threat.

**(5)** Excessive use of alcohol or drugs leading to faulty judgment or unconsciousness in a cold environment increases the risk of becoming a cold injury casualty.

#### ***Signs and Symptoms.***

Once a adventurer becomes familiar with the factors that contribute to cold injury, he must learn to recognize cold injury signs and symptoms.

- Many adventurers suffer cold injury without realizing what is happening to them. They may be cold and generally uncomfortable. These adventurers often do not notice the injured part because it is already numb from the cold.
- Superficial cold injury usually can be detected by numbness or tingling sensations. These signs and symptoms often can be relieved simply by loosening boots or other clothing and by exercising to improve circulation. In more advanced cases involving deep cold injury, the adventurer often is not aware that there is a problem until the affected part feels like a stump or block of wood.
- Outward signs of cold injury include discoloration of the skin at the site of injury. In light-skinned persons, the skin first reddens and then becomes pale or waxy white. In dark-skinned persons, greyness in the skin is usually evident. An injured foot or hand feels cold to the touch. Swelling may be an indication of deep injury. Also note that blisters may occur

after rewarming the affected parts. Adventurers should work in pairs (buddy teams) to check each other for signs of discoloration and other symptoms.

### ***First Aid Measures.***

First aid for cold injuries depends on whether they are superficial or deep. Rewarming the affected part using body heat can adequately treat cases of superficial cold injury. (For example, this can be done by covering cheeks with hands, putting fingertips in armpits, or placing the casualty's feet under the clothing of a buddy [next to his belly].) The injured part should **NOT** be massaged, exposed to a fire or stove, rubbed with snow, slapped, chafed, or soaked in cold water. Walking on injured feet should be avoided. Deep cold injury (frostbite) is very serious and requires prompt first aid to avoid or to minimize the loss of parts or all of the fingers, toes, hands, or feet. The sequence for treating cold injuries depends on whether the condition is life-threatening. The first priority in managing cold injuries is to remove the casualty from the cold environment (such as building an improvised shelter). Other injuries the casualty may have are provided first aid simultaneously while waiting for transportation or evacuation. If the casualty is to be transported in a nonmedical vehicle, first aid measures should be continued en route to the HOSPITAL.

### ***Conditions Caused by Cold.***

Conditions caused by cold include chilblain, immersion syndrome (immersion foot and trench foot), frostbite, snow blindness, dehydration, and hypothermia.

#### **(1) Chilblain.**

- *Signs and symptoms.* Chilblain is caused by repeated prolonged exposure of bare skin at temperatures from 60° Fahrenheit (F) to 32°F, or 20°F for acclimated, dry, unwashed skin. The area may be acutely swollen, red, tender, and hot with itchy skin. There may be no loss of skin tissue in untreated cases but continued exposure may lead to infected, ulcerated, or bleeding lesions.
- *First aid measures.* Within minutes, the area usually responds to locally applied body heat. Rewarm the affected part by applying firm steady pressure with your hands, or placing the affected part
- under your arms or against the stomach of a buddy. **DO NOT** rub or massage affected areas.

#### **NOTE**

Medical personnel should evaluate the injury, because signs and symptoms of tissue damage may be slow to appear.

#### **(2) Immersion syndrome (immersion foot and trench foot).**

Immersion foot and trench foot are injuries that result from fairly long exposure of the feet to wet conditions at temperatures from approximately 32°F to 50°F. Inactive feet in damp or wet socks and boots, or tightly laced boots which impair circulation, are even more susceptible to injury. This injury can be very serious; it can lead to loss of toes or parts of the feet. If exposure of the feet has been prolonged and severe, the feet may swell so much that pressure closes the blood vessels and cuts off circulation. Should

an immersion injury occur, dry the feet thoroughly and transport the casualty to an HOSPITAL by the fastest means possible.

***Signs and symptoms.*** At first, the parts of the affected foot are cold and painless, the pulse is weak, and numbness may be present. Second, the parts may feel hot and burning and shooting pains may begin. In later stages, the skin is pale with a bluish cast and the pulse decreases. Other signs and symptoms that may follow are blistering, swelling, redness, heat, haemorrhaging (bleeding), and gangrene.

**First aid measures.** First aid measures are required for all stages of immersion syndrome injury. Rewarm the injured part gradually by exposing it to warm air. Protect it from trauma and secondary infections. Dry, loose clothing or several layers of warm coverings are preferable to extreme heat. Under no circumstances should the injured part be exposed to an open fire. Elevate the injured part to relieve the swelling. Transport the casualty to HOSPITAL as soon as possible. When the part is rewarmed, the casualty often feels a burning sensation and pain. Symptoms may persist for days or weeks even after rewarming.

**NOTE**

When providing first aid for immersion foot and trench foot— **DO NOT** massage the injured part. **DO NOT** moisten the skin. **DO NOT** apply heat or ice.

**(3) Frostbite.** Frostbite is the injury of tissue caused from exposure to cold, usually below 32°F depending on the windchill factor, duration of exposure, and adequacy of protection. Individuals with a history of cold injury are likely to suffer an additional cold injury. The body parts most easily frostbitten are the cheeks, nose, ears, chin, forehead, wrists, hands, and feet. Frostbite may involve only the skin (superficial), or it may extend to a depth below the skin (deep). Deep frostbite is very serious and requires prompt first aid to avoid or to minimize the loss of parts or all of the fingers, toes, hands, or feet.

**Signs and symptoms.**

- Loss of sensation (numb feeling) in any part of the body.
- Sudden blanching (whitening) of the skin of the affected part, followed by a momentary tingling sensation.
- Redness of skin in light-skinned adventurers; greyish colouring in dark-skinned adventurers.
- Blisters.
- Swelling or tender areas.
- Loss of previous sensation of pain in affected area.
- Pale, yellowish, waxy-looking skin.
- Frozen tissue that feels solid (or wooden) to the touch.

**CAUTION**

Deep frostbite is a very serious injury and requires immediate first aid and subsequent medical treatment to avoid or minimize loss of body parts.

**First aid measures.**

- **Face, ears, and nose.** Cover the casualty's affected area with his and/or your bare hands until sensation and colour return.
- **Hands.** Open the casualty's field jacket and shirt. (In a chemical environment, do not loosen or remove the clothing and protective over garments.) Place the affected hands under the casualty's armpits. Close the field jacket and shirt to prevent additional exposure.
- **Feet.** Remove the casualty's boots and socks if he does not need to walk any further to receive additional treatment. (Thawing the casualty's feet and forcing him to walk on them will cause additional pain and injury.) Place the affected feet under clothing and against the body of another adventurer.

**WARNING**

**DO NOT attempt to thaw the casualty's feet or other frozen areas if he will be required to walk or travel to an HOSPITAL for additional medical treatment. The possibility of additional injury from walking is less when the feet are frozen than when they are thawed. (However, if possible avoid walking.) Thawing in the field increases the possibilities of infection, gangrene, or other injury.**

**NOTE**

Thawing may occur spontaneously during transportation to the HOSPITAL; this cannot be avoided since the body in general must be kept warm. In all of the above areas, ensure that the casualty is

kept warm and that he is covered (to avoid further injury). Seek medical treatment as soon as possible.

Reassure the casualty, protect the affected area from further injury by covering it lightly with a blanket or any dry clothing, and seek shelter out of the wind. Remove or loosen constricting clothing (except in a contaminated environment) and increase insulation. Ensure the casualty exercises as much as possible, avoiding trauma to the injured part, and is prepared for pain when thawing occurs. Protect the frostbitten part from additional injury.

**DO NOT—**

- Rub the injured part with snow or apply cold water soaks.
- Warm the part by massage or exposure to open fire because the frozen part may be burned due to the lack of feeling.
- Use ointments or other salves.
- Manipulate the part in any way to increase circulation.
- Use alcohol or tobacco because this reduces the body's resistance to cold.

**NOTE**

Remember, when freezing extends to a depth below the skin, it is a much more serious injury. Extra care is required to reduce or avoid the chances of losing all or part of the toes or feet. This also applies to the fingers and hands.

**(4) Snow blindness.**

Snow blindness is the effect that glares from an ice field or snowfield has on the eyes. It is more likely to occur in hazy, cloudy weather than when the sun is shining. Glare from the sun will cause an individual to instinctively protect his eyes. However, in cloudy weather, he may be overconfident and expose his eyes longer than when the threat is more obvious. He may also neglect precautions such as the use of protective eyewear. Waiting until discomfort (pain) is felt before using protective eyewear is dangerous because a deep burn of the eyes may already have occurred.

**Signs and symptoms.** Symptoms of snow blindness are a sensation of grit in the eyes with pain in and over the eyes, made worse by moving the eyeball. Other signs and symptoms are watering, redness, headache, and increased pain on exposure to light.

**First aid measures.** First aid measures consist of blindfolding or covering the eyes with a dark cloth which stops painful eye movement. Complete rest is desirable. If further exposure to light is not preventable, the eyes should be protected with dark bandages or the darkest glasses available. Once unprotected exposure to sunlight stops, the condition usually heals in a few days without permanent damage. The casualty should be evacuated to the nearest HOSPITAL.

**(5) Dehydration.** Dehydration occurs when the body loses too much fluid. A certain amount of body fluid is lost through normal body processes. A normal daily intake of liquids replaces these losses. When individuals are engaged in any strenuous exercises or activities, fluid is lost through sweating and this loss creates an imbalance of fluids in the body, and if not matched by rehydration it can contribute to dehydration. The danger of dehydration is as prevalent in cold regions as it is in hot regions. In hot weather, the individual is aware of his body losing fluids through sweat. In cold weather, however, it is extremely difficult to realize that this condition exists since sweating is not as apparent as in a hot environment. The danger of dehydration in cold weather operations is a serious problem. In cold climates, sweat evaporates so rapidly or is absorbed so thoroughly by layers of heavy clothing that it is rarely visible on the skin. Dehydration also occurs during cold weather operations because drinking is inconvenient. Dehydration will weaken or incapacitate a casualty for a few hours, or sometimes, several days. Because rest is an important part of the recovery process, casualties must take care that limited movement during their recuperative period does not enhance the risk of becoming a cold injury casualty.

**Signs and symptoms.** The symptoms of cold weather dehydration are similar to those encountered in heat exhaustion. The mouth, tongue, and throat become parched and dry, and swallowing becomes difficult. The casualty may have nausea (with or without vomiting) along with extreme dizziness and fainting. The casualty may also feel generally tired and weak and may experience muscle cramps. Focusing the eyes may also become difficult.

**First aid measures.** The casualty should be kept warm and his clothes should be loosened (if not in a chemical environment) to allow proper circulation. Shelter from wind and cold must be provided. Fluid replacement should begin immediately and the adventurer transported to an HOSPITAL as soon as possible.

#### **(6) Hypothermia (general cooling).**

When exposed to prolonged cold weather a adventurer may become both mentally and physically numb, thus neglecting essential tasks and requiring more time and effort to achieve them. Under some conditions (particularly cold water immersion), even a adventurer in excellent physical condition may die in a matter of minutes.

The destructive influence of cold on the body is called *hypothermia*. This means bodies lose heat faster than they can produce it. Hypothermia can occur from exposure to temperatures either above or below freezing, especially from immersion in cold water, wet-cold conditions, or from the effect of wind. Physical exhaustion and insufficient food intake may also increase the risk of hypothermia. General cooling of the entire body to a temperature below 95°F is caused by continued exposure to low or rapidly dropping temperatures, cold moisture, snow, or ice. Fatigue, poor physical condition, dehydration, faulty blood circulation, alcohol or other drug use, trauma, and immersion can cause hypothermia. Remember, cold may affect the body systems slowly and almost without notice.

Adventurers exposed to low temperatures for extended periods may suffer ill effects even if they are well protected by clothing.

#### **Signs and symptoms.**

As the body cools, there are several stages of progressive discomfort and impairment. A sign that is noticed immediately is shivering. Shivering is an attempt by the body to generate heat. The pulse is faint or very difficult to detect. People with temperatures around 90°F may be drowsy and mentally slow. Their ability to move may be hampered, stiff, and uncoordinated, but they may be able to function minimally. Their speech may be slurred. As the body temperature drops further, shock becomes evident as the person's eyes assume a glassy state, breathing becomes slow and shallow, and the pulse becomes weaker or absent. The person becomes very stiff and uncoordinated. Unconsciousness may follow quickly. As the body temperature drops even lower, the extremities freeze, and a deep (or core) body temperature (below 85°F) increases the risk of irregular heart action. This irregular heart action or heart standstill can result in sudden death.

**First aid measures.** Except in cases of the most severe hypothermia (marked by coma or unconsciousness and a weak pulse), first aid measures for hypothermia are directed towards protecting the casualty from further loss of body heat. For the casualty who is conscious, first aid measures are directed at rewarming the body evenly and without delay. Provide heat by using a hot water bottle or field expedient or another adventurer's body heat.

#### **NOTE**

When using a hot water bottle or field expedient (canteen filled with warm water), the bottle or canteen must be wrapped in cloth prior to placing it next to the casualty. This will reduce the chance of burning the casualty's skin. Always call or send for help as soon as possible and protect the

casualty immediately with dry clothing or a sleeping bag. Then, move him to a warm place. Evaluate other injuries and provide first aid as required.

First aid measures can be performed while the casualty is waiting transportation. In the case of an accidental breakthrough into ice water, or other hypothermic accident, strip the casualty of wet clothing immediately and bundle him into a sleeping bag. Rescue breathing should be started at once if the casualty's breathing has stopped or is irregular or shallow. Warm liquids (**NOT HOT**) may be given gradually if the casualty is conscious. **DO NOT** force liquids on an unconscious or semiconscious casualty because he may choke.

The casualty should be transported on a stretcher because the exertion of walking may aggravate circulation problems. Medical personnel should immediately treat any hypothermia casualty. Hypothermia is life threatening until normal body temperature has been restored. The first aid measures for a casualty with severe hypothermia are based upon the following principles: attempt to avoid further heat loss, handle the casualty gently, and transport the casualty as soon as possible to the nearest HOSPITAL. If at all possible, the casualty should be evacuated by medical personnel.

#### **WARNING**

**Rewarming a severely hypothermic casualty is extremely dangerous in the field due to the possibility of such complications as rewarming, shock and disturbances in the rhythm of the heartbeat. These conditions require treatment by medical personnel.**

#### **NOTE**

Resuscitation of casualties with hypothermic complications is difficult if not impossible to do outside of an HOSPITAL setting.

#### **CAUTION**

The casualty is unable to generate his own body heat. Therefore, merely placing him in a blanket or sleeping bag is not sufficient.

### **FIRST AID FOR BITES AND STINGS**

#### **General**

Bites from humans and other animals, such as dogs, cats, bats, raccoons, and rats, can cause severe bruises and infection and tears or lacerations of tissue. Awareness of the potential sources of injuries can reduce or prevent them from occurring. Knowledge and prompt application of first-aid measures can lessen the severity of injuries from bites and stings and keep the adventurer from becoming a serious casualty.

#### **Human or Animal Bites**

Human or other land animal bites may cause lacerations or bruises. In addition to damaging tissue, bites always present the possibility of infection.

**a. Human Bites.** Human bites that break the skin may become seriously infected since the mouth is heavily contaminated with bacteria. Medical personnel **MUST** treat all human bites.

**b. Animal Bites.** Land animal bites can result in both infection and disease. Tetanus, rabies, and various types of fevers can follow an untreated animal bite. Because of these possible complications, the animal causing the bite should, if possible, be captured or killed (without damaging its head) so that it can be tested for disease.

#### **c. First Aid.**

- (1) Cleanse the wound thoroughly with soap.
- (2) Flush it well with water.
- (3) Cover it with a sterile dressing.
- (4) Immobilize the injured arm or leg, if appropriate.
- (5) Transport the casualty immediately to an HOSPITAL.

#### **NOTE**

If unable to capture or kill the animal, provide medical personnel with any information that will help identify it.

### **Insect (Arthropod) Bites and Stings**

An insect bite or sting can cause great pain, allergic reaction, inflammation, and infection. If not treated correctly, some bites/stings may cause serious illness or even death. When an allergic reaction is not involved, first aid is a simple process. In any case, medical personnel should examine the casualty at the earliest possible time. It is important to properly identify the spider, bee, or creature that caused the bite/sting, especially in cases of allergic reaction.

**a. Types of Insects.** The insects found throughout the world that can produce a bite or sting are too numerous to mention in detail. Commonly encountered stinging or biting insects include brown recluse spiders black widow spiders, tarantulas, scorpions, urticating caterpillars, bees, wasps, centipedes, conenose beetles (kissing bugs), ants, and wheel bugs.

**b. Signs and Symptoms.** below are the most common effects of insect bites/stings. They can occur alone or in combination with the others.

**(1) Less serious.** Commonly seen signs/symptoms are pain, irritation, swelling, heat, redness, and itching. Hives or wheals (raised areas of the skin that itch) may occur. These are the least severe of the allergic reactions that commonly occur from insect bites/stings. They are usually dangerous only if they affect the air passages (mouth, throat, nose, and so forth), which could interfere with breathing. The bites/stings of bees, wasps, ants, mosquitoes, fleas, and ticks are usually not serious and normally produce mild and localized symptoms. A tarantula's bite is usually no worse than that of a bee sting. Scorpions are rare and their stings (except for a specific species found only in the Southwest desert) are painful but usually not dangerous.

**(2) Serious.** Emergency allergic or hypersensitive reactions sometimes result from the stings of bees, wasps, and ants. Many people are allergic to the venom of these particular insects. Bites or stings from these insects may produce more serious reactions, to include generalized itching and hives, weakness, anxiety, headache, breathing difficulties, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhoea. Very serious allergic reactions (called *anaphylactic shock*) can lead to complete collapse, shock, and even death. Spider bites (particularly from the black widow and brown recluse spiders) can also be serious. Venom from the black widow spider affects the nervous system. This venom can cause muscle cramps, a rigid, non-tender abdomen, breathing difficulties, sweating, nausea, and vomiting. The brown recluse spider generally produces local rather than system-wide problems; however, local tissue damage around the bite can be severe and can lead to an ulcer and even gangrene.

**c. First Aid.** There are certain principles that apply regardless of what caused the bite/sting. Some of these are—

- If there is a stinger present (for example, from a bee), remove the stinger by scraping the skin's surface with a fingernail or knife. **DO NOT** squeeze the sac attached to the stinger because it may inject more venom.
- Wash the area of the bite/sting with soap and water (alcohol or an antiseptic may also be used) to help reduce the chances of an infection and remove traces of venom.
- Remove jewellery from bitten extremities because swelling may occur.
- In most cases of insect bites the reaction will be mild and localized; use ice or cold compresses (if available) on the site of the bite/ sting. This will help reduce swelling, ease the pain, and slow the
- absorption of venom. Meat tenderizer (to neutralize the venom) or calamine lotion (to reduce itching) may be applied locally. If necessary, seek medical assistance.

In more serious reactions (severe and rapid swelling, allergic symptoms, and so forth) treat the bite/sting by applying constricting bands above and below the site.



1. Be prepared to perform basic life-support measures, such as rescue breathing.
2. Reassure the casualty and keep him calm.
3. In serious reactions, attempt to capture the insect for positive identification; however, be careful not to become a casualty yourself.
4. If the reaction to the bite/sting appears serious, seek medical assistance.

#### **WARNING**

**Insect bites/stings may cause *anaphylactic shock* (a shock caused by a severe allergic reaction). This is a life-threatening event and a TRUE MEDICAL EMERGENCY. Be prepared to perform the basic life-support measures and to immediately transport the casualty to an HOSPITAL.**

#### **NOTE**

Be aware that some allergic or hypersensitive individuals may carry identification or emergency insect bite treatment kits. If the casualty is having an allergic reaction and has such a kit, administer the medication in the kit according to the instructions which accompany the kit.

### **FIRST AID FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL REACTIONS**

#### **General**

Psychological first aid is as natural and reasonable as physical first aid and is just as familiar. When you were hurt as a child, the understanding attitude of your parents did as much as the psychological effect of a bandage. Later, your disappointment or grief was eased by supportive words from a friend. Certainly, taking a walk and talking things out with a friend are familiar ways of dealing with an emotional crisis. The same natural feelings that make us want to help a person who is injured make us want to give a helping hand to a buddy who is upset. *Psychological first aid* really means nothing more complicated than assisting people with emotional distress whether it results from physical injury, disease, or excessive stress. Emotional distress is not always as visible as a wound or a broken bone. However, overexcitement, severe fear, excessive worry, deep depression, misdirected irritability, and anger are signs that stress has reached the point of interfering with effective coping. The more noticeable the symptoms become, the more urgent the need for you to be of help and the more important it is for you to know *how* to help.

#### **Importance of Psychological First Aid**

You must know how to give psychological first aid to be able to help yourself your buddies, and your unit in order to keep performing the mission. Psychological first aid measures are simple and easy to understand. Your decision of what to do depends upon your ability to observe the adventurer and understand his needs. Making the best use of resources requires ingenuity on your part. A stress reaction resulting in poor judgment can cause injury or even death to yourself or others on the battlefield. It can be even more dangerous if other persons are affected by the judgment of an emotionally upset adventurer. If it is detected early enough, the affected adventurer stands a good chance of remaining in his unit as an effective adventurer. If it is not detected early and if the adventurer becomes more emotionally upset, he may become a threat to himself and to others.

#### **Situations Requiring Psychological First Aid**

Psychological first aid (buddy aid) is most needed at the first sign that a adventurer cannot perform the mission because of emotional distress. Stress is inevitable in combat, in hostage and terrorist situations, and in civilian disasters such as floods, hurricanes, or industrial accidents.

Most emotional reactions to such situations are temporary, and the adventurer can still carry on with encouragement. Painful or disruptive symptoms may last for minutes, hours, or days. However, if the stress symptoms are seriously disabling, they may be psychologically contagious and endanger not only the emotionally upset adventurer but also the entire unit.

Sometimes people continue to function well during a disastrous event, but suffer from emotional scars which impair their job performance or quality of life at a later time. Painful memories and dreams may recur for months and years and still be considered a normal reaction. However, if the memories are so painful that the person must avoid all situations which arouse them, becomes socially withdrawn, or shows symptoms of anxiety, depression, or substance abuse, he needs treatment. Experience with police, firemen, emergency medical technicians, and others who deal with disasters has proved that the routine application of psychological first aid to all the participants, including those who have functioned well, greatly reduces the likelihood of future serious post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSDs).

### **Interrelationship of Psychological and Physical First Aid**

Psychological first aid should go hand in hand with physical first aid. The discovery of a physical injury or cause for an inability to function does not rule out the possibility of a psychological injury (or vice versa). The person suffering from pain, shock, fear of serious injury, or fear of death does not respond well to joking, indifference, or fearful-tearful attention. Fear and anxiety may take as high a toll of the adventurer's strength as does the loss of blood.

### **Goals of Psychological First Aid**

The goals of psychological first aid are to—

- Be supportive; assist the adventurer in dealing with his stress reaction.
- Prevent, and if necessary control, behavior harmful to himself and to others.
- Return the adventurer to duty as soon as possible after dealing with the stress reaction.

### **Respect for Others' Feelings**

- a.* Accept the adventurer you are trying to help without censorship or ridicule. Respect his right to his own feelings. Even though your feelings, beliefs, and behavior are different, DO NOT blame or make light of him for the way he feels or acts. Your purpose is to help him in this tough situation, not to be his critic. A person DOES NOT WANT to be upset and worried. When he seeks help, he needs and expects consideration of his fears, not abrupt dismissal or ridicule.
- b.* Realize that people are the products of a wide variety of factors. All people DO NOT react the same way to the same situations. Each individual has complex needs and motivations, both conscious and unconscious, that are uniquely his own. Often the one thing that finally causes the person to become overloaded by a stressful situation is not the stressor itself, but some other problem.

### **Emotional and Physical Disability**

- a.* Accept emotional disability as being just as real as physical disability. If a adventurer's ankle is seriously sprained in a fall, no one expects him to run right away. A adventurer's emotions may be temporarily strained by the overwhelming stress of battle or other traumatic incident. DO NOT demand that he pull himself together immediately and carry on without a break. Some individuals can pull themselves together immediately, but others cannot. The adventurer whose emotional stability has been disrupted has a disability just as real as the adventurer who has sprained his ankle. There is an unfortunate tendency in many people to regard as real only what they can see, such as a wound or bleeding. Some people tend to assume that damage involving a person's mind and emotions is just imagined, that he is not really sick or injured, and that he could overcome his trouble by using his will power.
- b.* The terms *it's all in your head*, *snap out of it*, and *get control of yourself* are often used by people who believe they are being helpful. Actually, these terms are expressions of hostility because they show lack of understanding. They only emphasize weakness and inadequacy. Such terms are of no use in psychological first aid.

- c. Every physically injured person has some emotional reaction to the fact that he is injured.
- It is normal for an injured person to feel upset. The more severe the injury, the more insecure and fearful he becomes, especially if the injury is to a body part which is highly valued. For example, an injury to the eyes or the genitals, even though relatively minor, is likely to be extremely upsetting. An injury to some other part of the body may be especially disturbing to an individual for his own particular reason. For example, an injury of the hand may be a terrifying blow to a surgeon or an injury to the eye of a pilot.
  - An injured adventurer always feels less secure, more anxious, and more afraid not only because of what has happened to him but because of what he imagines may happen as a result of his injury. This fear and insecurity may cause him to be irritable, uncooperative, or unreasonable. As you help him, always keep in mind that such behaviour has little or nothing to do with you personally. He needs your patience, reassurance, encouragement, and support.

## **RESCUE AND TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES**

### **General**

A basic principle of first aid is to evaluate the casualty's injuries and administer first aid before moving him. However, adverse situations or conditions may jeopardize the lives of both the rescuer and the casualty if this is done. It may be necessary *first to rescue* the casualty before first aid can be effectively or safely given. The life and/or the well-being of the casualty will depend as much upon the manner in which he is *rescued and transported*, as it will upon the first aid and medical treatment he receives. Rescue actions must be done quickly and safely. Careless or rough handling of the casualty during rescue operations can aggravate his injuries.

### **Principles of Rescue Operations**

- a. When faced with the necessity of rescuing a casualty who is threatened by hostile action, fire, water, or any other immediate hazard, DO NOT take action without first determining the extent of the hazard and your ability to handle the situation. DO NOT become a casualty.
- b. The rescuer must evaluate the situation and analyse the factors involved. This evaluation involves three major steps:
- (1) Identify the task.
  - (2) Evaluate circumstances of the rescue.
  - (3) Plan the action.

### **Considerations**

- a. First determine if a rescue attempt is actually needed. It is a waste of time, equipment, and personnel to rescue someone not in need of rescuing. It is also a waste to look for someone who is not lost or needlessly risk the lives of the rescuer(s). In planning a rescue, attempt to obtain the following information:
1. Who, what, where, when, why, and how the situation happened?
  2. How many casualties are involved and the nature of their injuries?
  3. What are the terrain features and the location of the casualties?
  4. Will there be adequate assistance available to aid in the rescue/evacuation?
  5. Can first aid and/or medical treatment be provided at the scene; will the casualties require movement to a safer location?
  6. What specialized equipment will be required for the rescue operation?
  7. Is the rescue area contaminated? Will decontamination equipment and materiel be required for casualties, rescue personnel, and rescue equipment?
  8. How much time is available?

**b.** The time element can play a significant role in how the rescue is attempted. If the casualties are in imminent danger of losing their lives (such as near a burning vehicle or in a burning building) the time available will be relatively short and will sometimes cause a rescuer to compromise planning stages and/or the first aid which can be given. However, if the casualty is in a relatively secure area and his physical condition is strong, more deliberate planning can take place. A realistic estimate of time available must be made as quickly as possible to determine action time remaining. The key elements are the casualty's physical and mental condition, the tactical situation, and the environment.

### **Plan of Action**

**a.** The casualty's ability to endure is of primary importance in estimating the time available. Age, physical condition, and extent of wounds and/or injuries will differ from casualty to casualty.

Therefore, to determine the time available, you will have to consider—

1. Endurance time of the casualty.
2. Extent of injuries.
3. Type of situation.
4. Personnel and/or equipment availability.
5. Weather.
6. Terrain (natural and man-made).
7. Environment (contaminated or uncontaminated).

**b.** In respect to terrain, you must consider altitude and visibility. In some cases, the casualty may be of assistance because he knows more about the particular terrain or situation than you do.

Maximum use of secure/reliable trails or roads is essential.

**c.** When taking weather into account, ensure that blankets and/or rain gear are available. Even a mild rain can complicate a normally simple rescue. In high altitudes and/or extreme cold and gusting winds, the time available is critically shortened. Be prepared to provide shelter and warmth for the casualty as well as the rescuers.

### **Proper Handling of Casualties**

**a.** You may have saved the casualty's life through the application of appropriate first aid measures. However, his life can be lost through rough handling or careless transportation procedures. Before you attempt to move the casualty—

- Evaluate the type and extent of his injuries.
- Ensure that dressings over wounds are adequately reinforced.
- Ensure that fractured bones are properly immobilized and supported to prevent them from cutting through muscle, blood vessels, and skin.

**b.** Based upon your evaluation of the type and extent of the casualty's injury and your knowledge of the various manual carries, you must select the best possible method of manual transportation. If the casualty is conscious, tell him how he is to be transported. This will help allay his fear of movement and gain his cooperation and confidence.

### **Positioning the Casualty**

The first step in any manual carry is to position the casualty to be lifted. If he is conscious, he should be told how he is to be positioned and transported. This helps lessen his fear of movement and to gain his cooperation. It may be necessary to roll the casualty onto his abdomen, or his back, depending upon the position in which he is lying and the particular carry to be used.

#### **a. To roll a casualty onto his abdomen,**

kneel at the casualty's uninjured side.

- (1) Place his arms above his head; cross his ankle which is farther from you over the one that is closer to you.

- (2) Place your hands on the shoulder which is farther from you; place your other hand in the area of his hip or thigh
- (3) Roll him gently toward you onto his abdomen

**b. To roll a casualty onto his back,**

follow the same procedure described in *a* above, except gently roll the casualty onto his back, rather than onto his abdomen.

### **Medical Evacuation and Transportation of Casualties**

#### **WARNING**

**Unless there is an immediate life-threatening situation (such as fire, explosion), DO NOT move a casualty with a suspected back or neck injury. Seek medical personnel for guidance on how to transport.**

Transporting a casualty by stretcher is safer and more comfortable for him than by manual means; it is also easier for you. Manual transportation, however, may be the only feasible method because of the terrain; or it may be necessary to save a life. For this reason, you must know how to transport him without increasing the seriousness of his condition.

#### **Manual Carries**

Casualties carried by manual means must be carefully and correctly handled; otherwise their injuries may become more serious or possibly fatal. Situation permitting, transport of a casualty should be organized and unhurried. Each movement should be performed as deliberately and gently as possible. Casualties should not be moved before the type and extent of injuries are evaluated and the required first aid is administered.

The exception to this occurs when the situation dictates immediate movement for safety purposes (for example, it may be necessary to remove a casualty from a burning vehicle); that is, the situation dictates that the urgency of casualty movement outweighs the need to administer first aid. Manual carries are tiring for the bearers and involve the risk of increasing the severity of the casualty's injury. In some instances, however, they are essential to save the casualty's life. Although manual carries are accomplished by one or two bearers, the two man carries are used whenever possible. They provide more comfort to the casualty, are less likely to aggravate his injuries, and are also less tiring for the bearers. The distance a casualty can be carried depends on many factors, such as—

1. Nature of the casualty's injuries.
2. Strength and endurance of the bearer(s).
3. Weight of the casualty.
4. Obstacles encountered during transport (natural or manmade).
5. Type of terrain.

**One-man Carries.** These carries should be used when only one bearer is available to transport the casualty.

**(1) The fireman's carry** is one of the easiest ways for one individual to carry another. After an unconscious or disabled casualty has been properly positioned, he is raised from the ground, then supported and placed in the carrying position.

- a.* After rolling the casualty onto his abdomen, straddle him. Extend your hands under his chest and lock them together.
- b.* Lift the casualty to his knees as you move backward.
- c.* Continue to move backward, thus straightening the casualty's legs and locking his knees.
- d.* Walk forward, bringing the casualty to a standing position; tilt him slightly backward to prevent his knees from buckling.

- e. As you maintain constant support of the casualty with one arm, free your other arm, quickly grasp his wrist, and raise his arm high. Instantly pass your head under his raised arm, releasing it as you pass under it.
- f. Move swiftly to face the casualty and secure your arms around his waist. Immediately place your foot between his feet and spread them apart (approximately 6 to 8 inches).
- g. Grasp the casualty's wrist and raise his arm high over your head.
- h. Bend down and pull the casualty's arm over and down on your shoulder, bringing his body across your shoulders. At the same time, pass your arm between his legs.
- i. Grasp the casualty's wrist with one hand, and place your other hand on your knee for support.
- i. Rise with the casualty positioned correctly. Your other hand is free for use.

**(2) The alternate method of the *fireman's carry*** for raising a casualty from the ground however, it should be used only when the bearer believes it to be safer for the casualty because of the location of his wounds. When the alternate method is used, care must be taken to prevent the casualty's head from snapping back and causing a neck injury. The steps for raising a casualty from the ground for the fireman's carry are also used in other one-man carries.

- a. Kneel on one knee at the casualty's head and face his feet. Extend your hands under his armpits, down his sides, and across his back.
- b. As you rise, lift the casualty to his knees. Then secure a lower hold and raise him to a standing position with his knees locked.

**(3) In the *supporting carry***, the casualty must be able to walk or at least hop on one leg, using the bearer as a crutch. This carry can be used to assist him as far as he is able to walk or hop.

- a. Raise the casualty from the ground to a standing position by using the fireman's carry.
- b. Grasp the casualty's wrist and draw his arm around your neck.
- c. Place your arm around his waist. The casualty is now able to walk or hop using you as a support.

**(4) The *arms carry*** is useful in carrying a casualty for a short distance (up to 50 meters) and for placing him on a stretcher.

- a. Raise or lift the casualty from the ground to a standing position, as in the fireman's carry.
- b. Place one arm under the casualty's knees and your other arm around his back.
- c. Lift the casualty.
- d. Carry the casualty high to lessen fatigue.

**(5) The *saddleback carry***, Only a conscious casualty can be transported by the *saddleback carry*, because he must be able to hold onto the bearer's neck. To use this technique—

- a. Raise the casualty to an upright position, as in the fireman's carry.
- b. Support the casualty by placing an arm around his waist. Move to the casualty's side. Have the casualty put his arm around your neck and move in front of him with your back to support him.
- c. Have the casualty encircle his arms around your neck
- d. Stoop, raise him on your back and clasp your hands together beneath his thighs, if possible.

**(6) In the *pack-strap carry***, the casualty's weight rests high on your back. This makes it easier for you to carry the casualty a moderate distance (50 to 300 meters). To eliminate the possibility of injury to the casualty's arms, you must hold his arms in a palms-down position.

- a. Lift the casualty from the ground to a standing position, as in the fireman's carry.
- b. Support the casualty with your arms around him and grasp his wrist closer to you.
- c. Place his arm over your head and across your shoulders.

- d. Move in front of him while still supporting his weight against your back.
- e. Grasp his other wrist and place this arm over your shoulder.
- f. Bend forward and raise or hoist the casualty as high on your back as possible so that his weight is resting on your back.

**NOTE**

Once the casualty is positioned on the bearer's back, the bearer remains as erect as possible to prevent straining or injuring his back.

**(7) The *belt carry*** is the best one-man carry for a long distance (over 300 meters). The casualty is securely supported upon your shoulders by a belt. Both your hands and the casualty's (if conscious) are free for carrying equipment, or climbing obstacles. With your hands free and the casualty secured in place, you are also able to creep through shrubs and under low-hanging branches.

- a. Link two belts (or three, if necessary) together to form a sling. Place the sling under the casualty's thighs and lower back so that a loop extends from each side.
- b. Lie face up between the casualty's outstretched legs. Thrust your arms through the loops and grasp his hands and trouser leg on his injured side.
- c. Roll toward the casualty's uninjured side onto your abdomen, bringing him onto your back. Adjust the sling, if necessary.
- d. Rise to a kneeling position. The belt will hold the casualty in place.
- e. Place one hand on your knee for support and rise to an upright position. (The casualty is supported on your shoulders.)
- f. Carry the casualty with your hands free for use in rifle firing, climbing, or surmounting obstacles.

**(8) The *cradle drop drag*** is effective in moving a casualty up or down steps.

- a. Kneel at the casualty's head (with him lying on his back). Slide your hands, with palms up, under the casualty's shoulders and get a firm hold under his armpits.
- b. Rise (partially), supporting the casualty's head on one of your forearms. (You may bring your elbows together and let the casualty's head rest on both of your forearms.)
- c. Rise and drag the casualty backward. (The casualty is in a semi sitting position.) Back down the steps, supporting the casualty's head and body and letting his hips and legs drop from step to step.

**NOTE**

If the casualty needs to be moved up the steps, you should back up the steps, using the same procedure.

***Two-man Carries.***

These carries should be used whenever possible. They provide more casualty comfort, are less likely to aggravate injuries, and are less tiring for the bearers. Five different two-man carries can be used.

**(1) The *two-man support carry*** can be used in transporting either conscious or unconscious casualties. If the casualty is taller than the bearers, it may be necessary for the bearers to lift the casualty's legs and let them rest on their forearms. The bearers—

- b. Help the casualty to his feet and support him with their arms around his waist.
- c. Grasp the casualty's wrists and draw his arms around their necks.

**(2) The *two-man arms carry*** is useful in carrying a casualty for a moderate distance (50 to 300 meters) and placing him on a stretcher. To lessen fatigue, the bearers should carry the casualty high and as close to their chests as possible. In extreme emergencies when there is no time to obtain a spine board, this carry is the safest one for transporting a casualty with a back injury. If possible, two

additional bearers should be used to keep the casualty's head and legs in alignment with his body. The bearers—

- a. Kneel at one side of the casualty; then they place their arms beneath the casualty's back, waist, hips, and knees.
- b. Lift the casualty while rising to their knees.
- c. Turn the casualty toward their chests, while rising to a standing position. Carry the casualty high to lessen fatigue.

**(3) The *two-man fore-and aft-carry*** is a useful *two-man carry* for transporting a casualty for a long distance (over 300 meters). The taller of the two bearers should position himself at the casualty's head. By altering this carry so that both bearers face the casualty, it is useful for placing a casualty on a stretcher.

- (a) The shorter bearer spreads the casualty's legs and kneels between them with his back to the casualty. He positions his hands behind the casualty's knees. The other bearer kneels at the casualty's head, slides his hands under the arms, across the chest, and locks his hands together.
- (b) The two bearers rise together, lifting the casualty.

**(4) *four-hand seat carry*** Only a conscious casualty can be transported with the *four-hand seat carry* because he must help support himself by placing his arms around the bearers' shoulders. This carry is especially useful in transporting a casualty with a head or foot injury for a moderate distance (50 to 300 meters). It is also useful for placing a casualty on a stretcher.

- a. Each bearer grasps one of his wrists and one of the other bearer's wrists, thus forming a packsaddle.
- b. The two bearers lower themselves sufficiently for the casualty to sit on the packsaddle; then, they have the casualty place his arms around their shoulders for support. The bearers then rise to an upright position.

**(5) The *two-hand seat carry*** is used when carrying a casualty for a short distance or for placing him on a stretcher. With the casualty lying on his back, a bearer kneels on each side of the casualty at his hips. Each bearer passes his arms under the casualty's thighs and back, and grasps the other bearer's wrists. The bearers rise lifting the casualty.

### **Improvised Stretchers**

Two men can support or carry a casualty without equipment for only short distances. By using available materials to improvise equipment, the casualty can be transported greater distances by two or more rescuers.

There are times when a casualty may have to be moved and a standard stretcher is not available. The distance may be too great for manual carries or the casualty may have an injury (such as a fractured neck, back, hip, or thigh) that would be aggravated by manual transportation. In these situations, stretchers can be improvised from materials at hand. Improvised stretchers must be as well constructed as possible to avoid risk of dropping or further injuring the casualty. Improvised stretchers are emergency measures and must be replaced by standard stretchers at the first opportunity.

Many different types of stretchers can be improvised, depending upon the materials available. A satisfactory stretcher can be made by securing poles inside such items as a blanket, poncho, shelter half, tarpaulin, mattress cover, jacket, shirt, or bed ticks, bags, and sacks. Poles can be improvised from strong branches, tent supports, skis, lengths of pipe or other objects. If objects for improvising poles are not available, a blanket, poncho, or similar item can be rolled from both sides toward the



centre so the rolls can be gripped for carrying a patient. Most flat-surface objects of suitable size can be used as stretchers. Such objects include doors, boards, window shutters, benches, ladders, cots, and chairs. If possible, these objects should be padded for the casualty's comfort.

**(1)** To improvise a stretcher using a blanket and poles the following steps should be used.

- Open the blanket and lay one pole lengthwise across the centre; then fold the blanket over the pole.
- Place the second pole across the center of the folded blanket.
- Fold the free edges of the blanket over the second pole and across the first pole.

**(2)** To improvise a stretcher using shirts or jackets, button the shirt or jacket and turn it inside out, leaving the sleeves inside, (more than one shirt or jacket may be required), then pass the pole through the sleeves.

**(3)** To improvise a stretcher from bed sacks and poles rip open the corners of bed ticks, bags, or sacks; then pass the poles through them.

**(4)** If no poles are available, roll a blanket, shelter half, tarpaulin, or similar item from both sides toward the centre. Grip the rolls to carry the casualty.

Either two or four adventurers (head/foot) may be used to lift a stretcher. To lift the stretcher, follow the procedure below.

- Raise the stretcher at the same time as the other carriers/bearers.
- Keep the casualty as level as possible.

**NOTE**

Use caution when transporting on a sloping incline/hill.