



First aid fact sheet

Shock



- Shock is a life-threatening condition.
- Any health condition or trauma can cause shock.
- It is important that you treat the injury or illness that is causing the shock, as well as treating the shock and the person as a whole.

Signs and symptoms

Initial shock

- pale face, fingernails and lips
- cool, moist skin
- faintness, dizziness
- nausea
- anxiety

Severe shock

- restlessness
- thirst
- weak, rapid pulse, which may become weaker or slower
- shallow, fast breathing
- drowsiness, confusion
- blue lips, face, earlobes, fingernails (this is a late sign and means the patient is very sick)
- unconsciousness

What to do

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Help the patient to lie down. Do not raise their legs.
- 3 Reassure the patient.
- 4 Manage severe bleeding then treat other injuries.
- 5 Loosen any tight clothing.
- 6 Keep the patient warm with a blanket or similar. Do not use any source of direct heat.
- 7 Give the patient small amounts of cool water to drink frequently if they are conscious, do not have abdominal trauma, and are unlikely to require an operation immediately.
- 8 Place the patient in the recovery position if they have difficulty breathing, become unconscious or are likely to vomit.
- 9 Seek medical aid or call triple zero (000) for an ambulance if the patient's injuries require it.

In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)

DRSABCD Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

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