

# GNM NURSING NOTES FIRST YEAR – FIRST AID

## FIRST AID

### **DEFINITION**

First aid is the immediate and initial assistance or care given to a person who has been injured or suddenly taken ill. It is the provision of basic medical care and support until more advanced medical help can be accessed. The primary goals of first aid are to preserve life, prevent the condition from worsening, and promote recovery. First aid techniques can include assessing the situation, calling for emergency services, providing CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation), controlling bleeding, managing shock, and addressing other common injuries or medical emergencies. The key principles of first aid are to assess the situation, prioritize care, and apply appropriate interventions based on the nature of the injury or illness.

### **AIM OF FIRST AID**

The primary aim of first aid is to provide immediate and initial care to a person who has been injured or suddenly taken ill.

The overarching goals of first aid are:

**Preserve Life:** The immediate concern in any medical emergency is to preserve the life of the affected individual. This

involves taking actions to prevent further harm, maintaining an open airway, and addressing life-threatening conditions.

**Prevent Further Injury or Illness:** First aid aims to prevent the condition from worsening. This may involve stabilizing injuries, controlling bleeding, immobilizing fractures, or taking steps to prevent the spread of illnesses.

**Promote Recovery:** First aid measures are designed to support the person's recovery process. This can include actions such as providing basic wound care, offering comfort and reassurance, and helping the individual until professional medical assistance arrives.

**Ensure the Safety of the Rescuer:** First aid providers should take steps to ensure their own safety and the safety of others at the scene. This may involve assessing potential hazards and taking appropriate precautions.

**Provide Comfort and Alleviate Pain:** Offering emotional support, reassurance, and comfort is also a part of first aid. Additionally, providing pain relief or managing discomfort can contribute to the overall well-being of the individual.

## **IMPORTANCE OF FIRST AID**

First aid is crucial for several reasons, and its importance cannot be overstated. Here are some key reasons why first aid is essential:

**Saves Lives:** One of the primary purposes of first aid is to preserve life. Immediate intervention can prevent a condition from becoming fatal and can sustain a person until professional medical help arrives.

**Prevents Further Injury:** Providing prompt first aid can prevent minor injuries from becoming more severe. Timely actions, such as controlling bleeding or immobilizing fractures, can reduce the risk of complications.

**Promotes Recovery:** Quick and appropriate first aid measures can contribute to a faster and smoother recovery for the injured or ill person. This may involve minimizing the impact of injuries or managing the symptoms of a sudden illness.

**Reduces Pain and Suffering:** First aid aims to alleviate pain and suffering by providing comfort, reassurance, and basic pain management. This not only improves the well-being of the person receiving aid but can also positively influence the overall outcome.

**Prevents Long-term Disabilities:** Timely and effective first aid can minimize the potential for long-term disabilities resulting from certain injuries. For example, quick response to a head injury can prevent further brain damage.

**Fosters a Safer Environment:** Knowledge of first aid promotes a culture of safety. People who are trained in first aid are more

likely to identify and address potential hazards, contributing to a safer environment in workplaces, homes, and public spaces.

**Empowers Individuals:** First aid training empowers individuals to take immediate action in emergency situations. It builds confidence and preparedness, enabling people to respond effectively to a wide range of injuries and medical emergencies.

**Reduces Emergency Response Time:** First aid provides immediate assistance while waiting for professional help to arrive. This can be critical, especially in situations where time is of the essence, such as cardiac arrests, choking incidents, or severe injuries.

**Increases Community Resilience:** When more individuals in a community are trained in first aid, the overall resilience of the community increases. In the event of a disaster or mass casualty incident, a greater number of people with first aid skills can provide assistance until formal emergency services can respond.

**Legal and Ethical Obligation:** In many situations, there is a legal and ethical obligation to provide assistance to someone in need. Failure to provide reasonable care in an emergency may have legal implications.

## **RULES OF FIRST AID**

While first aid procedures can vary based on the specific situation, there are some general rules and principles that guide the provision of first aid. Remember that these guidelines are not exhaustive, and professional training in first aid is recommended for a more comprehensive understanding. Here are some fundamental rules of first aid:

#### Assess the Scene:

Ensure the safety of yourself, the victim, and bystanders.

Identify potential hazards and take necessary precautions.

Determine the nature of the emergency and the number of casualties.

#### Call for Help:

Dial emergency services (e.g., 911 or local emergency number) as soon as possible.

Provide clear and concise information about the situation.

#### Protect Yourself:

Use personal protective equipment (if available) to protect against potential hazards, such as gloves or a CPR face shield.

Do not put yourself in danger; ensure the scene is safe before providing assistance.

#### Prioritize Care:

Assess the severity of injuries or illnesses and prioritize care based on the urgency of each situation.

Attend to life-threatening conditions first.

ABCs of First Aid:

**Airway:** Ensure the airway is open and clear. If needed, perform maneuvers to open the airway.

**Breathing:** Check for breathing. If the person is not breathing, provide rescue breaths or CPR.

**Circulation:** Check for a pulse. If absent, start chest compressions.

**Control Bleeding:**

Apply direct pressure to control bleeding from wounds.

Use dressings or bandages to cover the wound and maintain pressure.

**Immobilize Injuries:**

Immobilize fractures or dislocations to prevent further injury.

Use splints or slings as appropriate.

**Provide Comfort:**

Offer reassurance and comfort to the injured or ill person.

Keep them warm and calm.

Do Not Move the Injured Unless Necessary:

Avoid unnecessary movement of the injured person, especially if there is a suspicion of a spinal injury.

Observe and Monitor:

Continuously monitor the person's condition.

Be prepared to adjust your first aid actions based on changes in the person's status.

Maintain Confidentiality:

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of the person receiving first aid.

Stay with the Person:

Stay with the individual until professional help arrives and provide ongoing care as needed.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF FIRST AID**

The general principles of first aid provide a foundation for responding to various injuries and medical emergencies. These principles guide the actions of first aid providers in ensuring the safety and well-being of the injured or ill person. Here are some key general principles of first aid:

Assess the Situation:

Ensure the safety of yourself, the victim, and bystanders.

Assess the scene for potential hazards before providing assistance.

**Prioritize Safety:**

Take measures to protect yourself from harm.

Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when available.

**Call for Help:**

Dial emergency services (e.g., 911) as soon as possible.

Provide clear and concise information about the situation and follow any instructions given by emergency dispatchers.

**Assess the Person:**

Check for responsiveness by tapping or gently shaking the person.

Assess the person's breathing and pulse.

If the person is unconscious, initiate CPR if necessary.

**ABCs of First Aid:**

**Airway:** Ensure the airway is open and clear.

**Breathing:** Check for breathing. Administer rescue breaths or CPR if necessary.

**Circulation:** Check for a pulse. Start chest compressions if no pulse is present.



### Control Bleeding:

Apply direct pressure to control bleeding from wounds.

Use dressings or bandages to cover the wound and maintain pressure.

### Immobilize Injuries:

Immobilize fractures or dislocations to prevent further injury.

Use splints or slings as needed.

### Provide Comfort:

Offer reassurance and emotional support to the injured or ill person.

Keep the person calm and comfortable.

### Keep the Person Warm:

Prevent heat loss by covering the person with a blanket or clothing.

Maintain a comfortable temperature.

### Do Not Move the Injured Unnecessarily:

Avoid moving the person unless there is an immediate threat to their safety.

If movement is necessary, do so with caution, especially if there is a suspicion of a spinal injury.

### Observe and Monitor:

Continuously monitor the person's condition for changes.

Be prepared to adjust your first aid actions based on the person's response.

### Provide Information to Professional Responders:

When professional help arrives, provide relevant information about the person's condition, actions taken, and any changes observed.

### Maintain Confidentiality:

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of the person receiving first aid.

### Document What You've Done:

If possible, document the actions you have taken and any information that may be helpful for medical professionals.

### Continue Learning:

Stay informed about updated first aid techniques and guidelines.

Consider obtaining regular first aid training and certification.

## **CONCEPT OF EMERGENCY IN FIRST AID**

In the context of first aid, the concept of an emergency refers to a situation that poses an immediate risk to health, life, property, or the environment and requires prompt and decisive action. Emergencies can arise from various causes, including accidents, injuries, sudden illnesses, natural disasters, or other unforeseen events. The key features of emergencies in the context of first aid include urgency, the potential for harm, and the need for rapid and appropriate response.

Here are some essential aspects of the concept of emergency in first aid:

**Immediacy:**

Emergencies require immediate attention. Time is often a critical factor, and delaying appropriate action can result in worsened outcomes for the affected individual.

**Life-Threatening Situations:**

Emergencies often involve situations that pose a direct threat to life. Examples include cardiac arrest, severe bleeding, respiratory distress, and other conditions that demand swift intervention to preserve life.

**Severity of Injury or Illness:**

Emergencies can range from minor injuries or illnesses to severe and life-threatening conditions. The severity of the situation guides the level and urgency of the first aid response.

**Need for Professional Assistance:**

In many emergencies, professional medical help is required. First aid is often the initial response to stabilize the situation and provide immediate care until professional responders, such as paramedics or emergency medical services, arrive.

**Prioritization of Care:**

In an emergency, it's crucial to prioritize care based on the severity of injuries or illnesses. The most life-threatening conditions should be addressed first to maximize the chances of a positive outcome.

**Adaptability:**

First aid providers must be able to adapt their response to the specific needs of the emergency. This may involve adjusting techniques based on the age of the person, the nature of the injury, or the presence of any complicating factors.

**Communication:**

Clear and effective communication is essential during emergencies. This includes calling for professional help,

providing information to emergency dispatchers, and conveying relevant details to other first aid providers.

#### Use of Available Resources:

First aid providers often need to make the best use of available resources in an emergency. This includes using makeshift materials for bandaging, immobilization, or other necessary interventions.

#### Stress Management:

Responding to emergencies can be stressful. First aid providers need to remain calm, focused, and composed to make effective decisions and provide optimal care.

#### Legal and Ethical Considerations:

First aid providers should be aware of legal and ethical considerations in emergency situations. This may include respecting the person's autonomy, obtaining consent when possible, and adhering to local laws and regulations.