



Accident Prevention and Emergency First Aid for Infants, Children, & Teens



A resource for parents,
grandparents, and caregivers

From the time you find out you're going to be a parent, your child becomes the center of your world, and you'll do anything you can to protect them and keep them safe as they grow. However, the fears you have for an infant are certainly different than those you may have for your teenager, and how you treat them during an emergency differs, too.

To help you keep children safe at every stage, as well as what to do in the event of a life-endangering emergency, our CPR training center in Raleigh is sharing an in-depth look at risk factors, safety, and emergency care for every stage.

Part 1 - Infant Safety & CPR



As a parent, you know how fast things can happen when children are involved – from spilled drinks and broken knick-knacks to scraped knees – a quiet moment can turn to calamity. The same goes for serious emergencies, and while it's unthinkable to have to provide child or infant CPR, knowing what to do in the event your child stops breathing or goes into cardiac arrest can be the difference between a positive outcome and a tragedy.

Causes of Cardiac Arrest in Infants

For babies 12 months and under, there are several complications or factors that can cause them to stop breathing or go into cardiac arrest with little to no warning, including:

- Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
- Suffocation
- Choking
- Drowning
- Electrocution

Preventing Medical Emergencies in Infants

To keep infants as safe as possible, it's important to follow these preventative guidelines:

- Place your child on their back to sleep in their own crib or bassinet;
- There should be nothing in your baby's crib or bassinet besides a fitted sheet (no blankets, bumpers, or stuffed animals);
- Keep the floor clean and clear of any small objects like buttons, coins, and pieces of paper;
- Wait until your child is between four and six months to offer solid foods such as pureed or soft foods;
- Avoid high-risk foods such as hot dogs, chunks of meat or cheese, whole grapes, nuts, popcorn, and seeds;
- Supervise mealtimes;
- Keep the door to the bathroom closed, empty mop buckets immediately;

- Never leave your child unsupervised in a bathtub;
- Never put a necklace or anything else around your baby's neck;
- Remove or tie up cords on blinds or shades;
- Cover electrical outlets;

CPR Steps for Infants

If your baby is unresponsive, has stopped breathing, or has no heartbeat, taking immediate action is essential. In the event of an emergency, provide the following steps for care:

- Check for responsiveness – tap their heel for a reflex and call out to them. If someone is with you, have them call 911.
- Position the baby on their back and check for breathing.
- Place two fingers on the center of the baby's chest, and pressing gently to depress the chest about one and a half inches, provide 30 chest compressions at the rate of 100 a minute (to the beat of "Staying Alive")
- Lift the chin slightly to open the airway, taking care to avoid closing the baby's mouth or tilting the head too far back, cover the baby's mouth and nose with your mouth and give two gentle breaths with small puffs of air.
- Repeat the 30/2 cycle five times and call 911 if no one else has called.
- Resume CPR until help arrives or the child is breathing on their own.

Treating Choking in Infants

Choking is, unfortunately, very common in infants. As they begin exploring the world around them, one way they do this is to put things in their mouths. Pebbles, buttons, pieces of dog kibble, and parts of board games, in addition to food they may not be ready for, can lead to choking in babies, which is why it's so important to know the signs and how to react when a baby is choking.

Signs of Choking in Infants

Choking may be either a complete or partial blockage of the airway, and signs of distress can include:

- Blue-tinted skin from lack of oxygen;
- Inability to emit a strong cry or sound;
- Weak cough;
- Soft or whistling sounds when breathing in;
- Difficulty in Breathing

If the baby is coughing hard or can cry, monitor them closely, but do not perform the choking treatment steps as that can help dislodge the object. These are only for when the baby can't cough, cry, or is having difficulty breathing.

- Place the infant face down along your forearm, using your leg for support.
- Place your palm over the baby's chest and support the jaw with your fingers, angling the head downward, lower than the body.
- Provide five quick blows to the space between the shoulder blades using the heel of your other hand. If the object doesn't dislodge after five shoulder blows,

- support the head and turn the infant over so they are facing up across your legs or lap.
- Place two fingers in the center of the chest and give five quick chest compressions of an inch-and-a half deep.
- Roll the child back to the original position and administer five shoulder blows.
- Continue the 5 back/5 chest process until the object is clear or the infant loses consciousness.
- If the infant becomes unresponsive, shout for help if there's someone with you, and begin infant CPR.

If the object is visible to you, you can try to remove it with your finger, but this is only if you can see it clearly. Otherwise, you may inadvertently push the object back further.

Part 2 - CPR & First Aid for Children



While many new parents take CPR classes before or when their new babies are born, as their children move from the infant stage, they don't maintain their skills.

Though toddlers and older children aren't at risk for issues like SIDS or are at a lower risk for suffocation, it's still necessary for parents to have first aid and CPR training for children.

Common Medical Emergencies in Children Requiring CPR

It's a scary thought that over 12,000 children under the age of 19 die each year from accidental injuries, and while rare, sudden cardiac arrest does occur in children. Knowing how to properly respond to medical emergencies in children can ensure that you can provide lifesaving care that can be the difference between a positive outcome and a tragedy in the even of an emergency.

In children, cardiac arrest is most likely to come from:

- Choking
- Electrocutation
- Suffocation
- Drowning
- Congenital heart defect
- Injury, such as a car accident
- Poisoning

For children between one and four years of age, drowning is the leading cause of death, and for children five to 18, car accidents are the leading cause.

Preventing Medical Emergencies in Children and Toddlers

For young children, the risk of injury and death can be decreased when parents and caregivers take precautions. For toddlers this includes:

- Prevent drowning inside the home by never leaving a toddler alone in a bathtub, keeping the toilet lid secured, and emptying mop buckets and other sources of water immediately.
- Prevent outdoor drowning by having alarms on a door if there's an outdoor pool and keeping a pool fence locked.
- For small splash pools, keep them covered or empty when not in use.
- Avoid giving toddlers hard candy, nuts, and cylindrical or round objects that are choking hazards, like hot dogs or grapes, unless sliced vertically.
- Use the proper car seat for your child, and taking care to rear face until your child is two.
- Covering electrical outlets.
- Throwing away plastic bags and other suffocation hazards.
- Keep medication and household chemicals in locked cabinets or out of reach of children. Hold hands when crossing the street or when walking through parking lots.

With older children, over the age of five, reduce the risk of accidents with the following steps:

- Make sure you continue to use the right size car seat or booster seat and your child knows to stay buckled and sit upright in the seat at all times.
- Don't let children swim in a pool unattended and if they will be swimming, sign them up for swimming lessons.

- Discuss traffic and pedestrian safety, including looking both ways and using sidewalks and crosswalks
- Be aware of other children when playing on playgrounds to avoid getting injured from a child swinging or sliding down a slide.
- Continue to keep medication and household items where children can't get to them.

CPR Steps for Toddlers and Children

If there is a medical emergency and your child is unresponsive or is not breathing, it's important to take immediate action to provide care.

If someone is with you, have them call 911 while you check for responsiveness by shaking their shoulder, calling out to them, or tapping their heel. If you are alone, give two minutes of CPR before calling 911, and follow these steps for a child between one and eight years old:

- Carefully place the child on their back.
- Perform chest compressions by placing the heel of your hand on the breastbone toward the center of the chest, making sure it's not at the end of the breastbone.
- Keep your other hand on the child's forehead to tilt the head back slightly and compress the chest about 1/3 to 1/2 the depth of the chest.
- Give 30 chest compressions firmly and quickly, to the beat of the song "Staying Alive."
- Open the airway by gently lifting the chin and listening for breathing and watch for chest movements.

- If there's no breathing, pinch the nostrils shut, cover the child's mouth with yours and give two rescue breaths of about one second each.
- Continue the cycle of compressions and rescue breathing.

Treating Choking in Children

Choking is more common in toddlers and young children than older children, but it can happen to anyone. If the child can make sounds and produce a firm or loud cough, let them cough to clear the airway, but stay nearby. If your child can't breathe, make a sound, or is holding their neck, perform abdominal thrusts, by taking these steps:

- Kneeling behind the child and at shoulder height, and placing a fist just above the belly button and below the sternum with your thumb next to their belly.
- Hold your fist with your other hand and give quick, upward thrusts into their belly.
- Continue until the object comes out and they can breathe or cough or they become unresponsive.
- If they become unresponsive, follow CPR protocol.

Part 3: Safety & CPR for Teens



Teens and adolescents between the age of 13 and 18 are often forgotten when it comes to their first aid and CPR needs and are typically lumped in with adults. The injuries that affect teens the most are often not the same ones that affect infants – after all, a child who is 14 isn't going to be a victim of SIDS or is at a high risk of choking. Plus, pediatric CPR and first aid training for infants and children require different methods and protocols than teens.

That all being said, when it comes to first aid, teenagers have unique needs and risk, and shouldn't just be compared to adults. That's why we wanted to take an opportunity, as part of our series on CPR and first aid tips for children and infants, to discuss risk factors and treatment for teenagers.

Common Causes of Injury in Adolescents

The leading causes of death in teens are accidents, homicide, suicide, cancer, and heart disease. Accidents account for 48 percent of those deaths, and focusing only on unintentional injury and accidents, the most common causes among young people ages 13 to 18 are:

- Motor vehicle accidents (73 percent)
- Drowning (5 percent)
- Unintentional poisoning, including drug overdose (10 percent)
- Land transport accident, such as four-wheelers (3 percent)

The first thing is reducing risk for these accidents.

Car Accidents

- Parents setting good examples – not speeding, paying attention, not using a phone;
- Wearing a seat belt at all times;
- Eliminating distractions, including cell phones, while driving.
- Teach teens to keep their phones in the glove box or in the backseat while they drive;
- Taking a professional driving class;
- Continue to drive with newly licensed teens to help them improve their skills; Understanding the dangers of drinking and driving and being in a car with someone who has been drinking;
- Younger teens who are under 100 pounds are often safer in the backseat;

Poisoning and Overdoses

- Keep prescription medications and alcohol locked away;
- Dispose of any unused prescriptions;
- Have open discussions with teens about prescription drugs, illegal drugs, and their dangers;
- Have carbon monoxide detectors placed in the home;

Drowning

- Never swim alone;
- Stay sober on and in the water;
- Wear life jackets when boating, kayaking, or other water activity;

- Take swimming lessons for a refresher course;
- Consider taking a lifeguard instruction course

;ATV Accidents

- Wear a helmet and protective gear;
- Don't drive with a passenger or as a passenger;
- Children under 16 shouldn't operate ATVs nor ride as a passenger;

Administering CPR and First Aid to Teenagers

CPR and first aid for teenagers follows the same rules and guidelines as it does for adults. If a teenager has collapsed or is unconscious, follow these steps for CPR:

- Tap or gently shake the victim and ask loudly, "Are you OK?"
- Call 911 immediately if you're alone, or have someone else call for help;
- If the victim isn't breathing, begin chest compressions with the heel of your hand in the center of the chest with the other hand on top;
- Press straight down two inches deep at a rate of 100 compressions a minute (to the beat of "Stayin' Alive" by the BeeGees);
- Open the airway by gently lifting the chin, pinching the nostrils closed, and giving two rescue breaths of one second each;
- Continue until medical help arrives or it becomes unsafe to continue.

First aid tips for common injuries teens experience include:

- Stopping bleeding by placing a clean cloth, gauze, or towel onto the injury and applying consistent pressure;
- Staying with them until help arrives, talking to them, and keeping them calm;
- Keep injuries to bones stable and immobilized;

Enrolling in a CPR and First Aid Class with Your Teen

Often, when a teenager is injured, an adult may not be there, so it's important that they learn how to administer CPR and first aid. Consider taking a class with your teenager so you can both get your CPR certification or talk to your local schools about offering on-site CPR training. The more people who have these life saving skills, the more likely you are to see positive outcomes from injury.

Getting CPR & First Aid Certified

While this guide is designed to help parents, grandparents, and caregivers know how to prevent emergencies and respond if one should happen, having professional CPR and First Aid training is an essential, life-saving skill.

At CPR Educators, we have an American Heart Association Certified Training Center, and provide pediatric and adult first aid and CPR training.

In addition to our training center, we also offer on-site training for schools, places of employment, and organizations. We will send a certified instructor to teach a group of six or more right at your business or school.

To learn more, call us at (919) 639-4848 or fill out our contact form at <https://cpreducatorsinc.com/contact/>

