

THE SAFETY OBSERVER

Safety Information for Employees

FIRST AID – CUTS, SCRAPES, BLEEDING

Accidents and injuries occur when least expected. Because we do not always have trained medical professionals readily available, it is important for all employees to understand exactly how to respond to one of these unexpected situations. OSHA has a first-aid regulation, 29 CFR 1910.15, that requires employers to ensure the ready availability of medical personnel for advice and consultation on matters of on the job health. Therefore, if your community is not close to a clinic or hospital, you are required by OSHA to have a person or persons trained in first aid on premises and each property to have proper first aid supplies on hand.

Minor Cuts and Scrapes

These types of injuries are the most common, and typically require no professional medical attention. Basic first-aid must still be followed to prevent additional injury or infection. Here are the steps to follow:

1. When assisting a victim, protect yourself from contact with their blood by wearing rubber gloves.
2. If there is bleeding, apply pressure to wound with a clean cloth until bleeding stops.
3. Use a mild soap to clean the wound and the area surrounding the wound. Hydrogen peroxide is also recommended after the wound is cleaned with soap and water.
4. Treat the cut/scrape with a recommended ointment to protect against contamination.
5. Cover the affected area to absorb any fluids and to protect the wound.
6. Securely tape the bandage in place with medical tape, or perhaps a simple band-aid will work.

Bleeding

All employees must be aware of the potential dangers involved with exposure to another person's blood and protect themselves by wearing rubber gloves whenever working around blood or other bodily fluids. If gloves are not available, assist the victim by handing them a clean rag or cloth in which to apply pressure with. If a victim is unable to apply pressure for him or herself, bundle the cloth so you do not come in contact with the blood to apply pressure, and call for help. Following are some general guidelines to follow when faced with a bleeding situation:

1. Act quickly – have the victim lie down and elevate injured limb above heart (unless the limb is suspected broken).
2. Apply direct pressure. To control bleeding, use a clean cloth or sterile pad and apply directly to wound.
3. If bleeding is controlled, firmly wrap wound with a bandage and seek medical help.
4. If severe bleeding continues, the final resort is to apply a tourniquet. A tourniquet will only be necessary if the person has lost a lot of blood and the bleeding is life threatening.
5. Acquire medical attention immediately.