UNIT 4
FIRST AID

How good it is to sing praise to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise Him. He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds. Psalm 147:1-2

David was a shepherd who took care of his father's flocks. As any good shepherd he would bind up the wounds of his sheep when they were injured. While he tended his sheep, he could not help but remember that his Good Shepherd, God, did the same thing for him. Through faith in Jesus Christ, we also know that "by His wounds we are healed" from the disease of sin. May we praise the Lord, as we learn to help those who are sick or injured, that we have been healed of the greatest sickness of all, sin.

"First Aid is the immediate care given to an injured or sick person until the services of a physician can be obtained." This is the opening sentence in the American Red Cross First Aid Textbook for Juniors, and is the definition of First Aid. Notice that first aid is the immediate care that is performed before the doctor arrives. First aiders are not expected to be doctors or to have a great knowledge about medicine. If you are called on to administer first aid to an injured person, you must be able to recognize and treat some very important problems. Knowing what to do and what not to do before the doctor arrives is expected.

After you have read and studied this chapter, you will be able to recognize and treat some minor injuries.

BRUISE

What is a bruise? A bruise is an injury, such as a black eye, where the skin turns a darker shade of color because the blood vessels are broken. The treatment for a bruise is to place something cold on the injured area to prevent additional tissue swelling and to slow down the internal bleeding. A handkerchief dipped in cool water or an ice cube wrapped in a cloth works very well.

BURNS

Burns are classified according to the degree of skin damage. A superficial burn can be recognized by a light redness of the skin with some swelling and pain. You can get a superficial burn from the sun (sunburn) or touching something that is hot, like a frying pan. A partial thickness burn will cause the skin to turn a darker red color and blisters will begin forming around the area that is burned. You can get a partial thickness burn from the sun, from a fire, or being scalded by hot liquids. The treatment for both degrees of burns is the same. It is important to cool the burned area as soon as possible. This can be done by soaking the burned area in cold water or by applying cold-water soaked pads. In full thickness burns, there is deep tissue damage. The victim urgently needs medical attention. Treat these by covering the burned area with a thick, clean, dry bandage or with clean plastic wrap or plastic bags. The burned area is especially sensitive to infection and should be kept as clean as possible. Also treat for shock.

BLISTERS

Most blisters appear on the feet and hands because of something continually rubbing against the skin. At first, the skin will turn red and become tender. If the rubbing continues, a blister will be formed. The blister is a cushion of water; the body's way of protecting the skin from further injury. Never break a blister. The best treatment is to keep it clean and covered with a bandage or moleskin.

INSECT BITES



There are many insects that annoy us with their bites. Chiggers, ants, flies, ticks, gnats and mosquitoes are just a few. The treatment for these bites is to dab a small amount of calamine lotion on the area to relieve any itching or minor pain.

SMALL CUT

When you have a small cut, you should guard it against germs and infection. Wash the wound with soap and water and apply an antiseptic such as Neosporin or other topical antibiotic. You should then cover the wound with a bandage.

NOSEBLEEDS

If your nose starts bleeding, the easiest way to stop it is to apply a cold, wet cloth directly to the nose or to pinch the nostrils between your fingers for a few minutes while tilting your head back. Applying ice to the area below the nose also helps. The bleeding should then stop.

SPLINTERS

Splinters are small fragments of wood, metal or glass that enter and break off just below the surface of the skin. The easiest way to remove them is with a tweezers or sterile needle. Once the splinter is removed, the area should be treated as you would a small cut, by washing and then covering with a bandage.

EARACHE

When someone complains of an earache or an insect gets in the ear, a few drops of warm water, warm milk or mineral oil placed in the ear will help relieve the pain. A small wad of cotton in the ear will help keep the liquid in. A hot water bottle may also help ease the pain.

EYE INJURIES

If someone has been poked in the eye, it is best for a doctor to examine it. If the injury is serious, both eyes should be bandaged to prevent further damage by eye movement. If a small piece of dirt is in the eye, tell the victim not to rub it, but have someone gently pull on the eyelids to locate the foreign particle. Once it is found, it can easily be lifted off with the corner of a handkerchief or other clean cloth.

FAINTING

Fainting is caused by a lack of blood to the brain. If the person feels like fainting, but is still conscious, have him sit down with his head between his legs. If he has fainted, lay him down and keep his head lower than the rest of his body. Loosen tight clothing.

FRACTURE

If a person has a broken bone, the area will be painful, very tender, swollen and discolored. Treat him for shock and move him as little as possible. If you have to move the victim, immobilize the fracture with a splint. To immobilize a limb properly, you should splint the joints above and below the fracture. Don't bind the splint too tight so that the circulation will be cut off. If a broken bone protrudes through the skin, the limb should be sterilized in position and the wound covered with a wet, thick, sterile gauze pad and bandaged firmly in place. Don't try to cleanse the wound and do not try to straighten the limb to a natural position.

FROSTBITE

Frostbite occurs when your skin has been exposed to cold temperatures and it is beginning to die. Frostbite normally occurs in your feet, hands, nose or ears. It can be quite painful. Get the victim to a warm shelter as soon as possible and have him drink warm liquids. Thaw slowly with lukewarm (NOT HOT) water or by gently wrapping in a warm blanket or clothes. DO NOT RUB THE AFFECTED AREA WITH SNOW OR YOUR HANDS, NOR PLACE IT NEXT TO A HEAT SOURCE SUCH AS A STOVE OR FIREPLACE.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Too much heat and insufficient salts cause Heat Exhaustion. The victim's face will be pale and sweaty and breathing will be shallow. The victim may also vomit. Treat him for shock by keeping him warm and his head lower than his body. If the victim is conscious, he can be given small amounts of salted water (one teaspoon of table salt to 1 pint of water) or Gatorade/ Powerade.

HYPOTHERMIA

When the body is exposed to chilling temperatures for an extended period of time, the internal body temperature begins to drop. When this happens, the victim will begin to lose coordination and as the internal temperature continues to drop, he will become drowsy and possibly incoherent. If he is not treated immediately, he will lose consciousness and die. Hypothermia can occur even when the outside air temperature is 50 degrees and it is windy and raining. It is important to get the victim out of his wet clothes, under a shelter, into a warm sleeping bag and drinking warm fluids. If hypothermia is in advanced stages, the victim will be unable to produce his own body heat and someone will have to be in the sleeping bag with him to provide the necessary heat.

POISONING, INTERNAL

The symptoms of internal poisoning are stomach pains, headaches, vomiting and possible burning around the mouth. The first thing is to determine what type of poison has been ingested. As a general rule, if the poison is an acid, do not induce vomiting but rather neutralize it by having the victim drink a mixture of baking soda and water or milk. If the poison is a caustic or alkaline solution, it is best to try to get the victim to vomit by drinking salt water or sticking your fingers down his throat. If you are unable to determine what type of poison the victim has taken, do not do anything except to keep the victim calm and quiet. Obtain medical help immediately.



POISONING, EXTERNAL

There are several plants that can cause your skin to react adversely when you come in contact with them, including poison ivy, poison sumac and poison oak. If you know that you have touched one of these plants, wash the affected area with soap and water and rinse with alcohol. If the skin does break out, applying calamine or some other lotion can reduce the itching, specifically designed for skin poisoning.

PUNCTURE WOUNDS

Whether you step on a nail or get a fishhook caught in your finger, there is always the danger of lockjaw with a puncture wound. The nail is easy to remove but a fishhook should be pushed all the way through your finger until the barb is s ticking out the other side. The barb is then cut off and the fishhook pulled back out. If the fishhook is not very deep, try backing it out. With a finger or thumb, press down firmly on the shank of the hook near the bend. This disengages the barb from the tissue. Looping a length of string around the bend of the hook, pull firmly, jerking the barb out. Treat any puncture wound by washing it and applying an antiseptic. You should then see a doctor.

SNAKEBITES

Generally speaking, if a snake bites someone, it was probably not poisonous. Nevertheless, the best treatment is to keep the victim calm and get him to a doctor immediately. If medical attention is several hours away, a snug bandage placed on either side of the bite will help slow down the spread of the poison. A snakebite kit with a suction cup should also be used immediately after the bite to remove some of the poison.

SPRAINS

Who hasn't "sprained" his ankle at least once? Internally, the soft tissues surrounding the joint are injured and it begins to swell. Cold compresses will help keep the swelling down and ease the pain. If possible, it should also be bandaged to restrict movement.

SUNSTROKE

Sunstroke is caused by too much exposure to the sun. The victim's face will be red and dry and his breathing will be slow and noisy. The skin will feel very dry and hot. Get the patient into a cool, shaded area and lay him down with his head higher than his body. Rubbing him with wet towels and giving him cold water to drink are ways to reduce his body temperature to normal.

TICKS

When you are in tick country, you should always examine yourself for tick bites. If you find a tick that is burrowed in, do not pull him off as this may leave the tick's head buried in your skin. It is better if he backs out himself because you have made him uncomfortable. Touching him with a hot needle, covering him with a liquid such as mineral oil, or spraying him with short bursts of any type of insect spray until he backs out can do this. Once the tick is off, wash the area and apply an antiseptic.

EMERGENCY FIRST AID

In addition to all of the above situations, when you are treating someone with first aid, you must be able to recognize and treat three very important problems.

1. Make sure the victim is breathing
2. Stop or slow down any bleeding
3. Always treat the victim for shock

The first thing to look for is that the victim is breathing. Without air, they will begin to sustain brain damage within minutes. If the person is not breathing, you should immediately begin mouth-to-mouth artificial respiration. First, make sure that the victim's mouth is clear of anything that might prevent breathing, including the tongue. Second, placing one of your hands under the victim's neck, raise his head slightly and tilt it back by pressing on his forehead with your other hand. Third, still holding his neck up, pinch his nose with your other hand and put your mouth over the victim's mouth (if the victim is a small child or baby, place your mouth over his mouth and nose). Fourth, watching the victim's chest, blow air into the victim's lungs at the rate of 12 times per minute, allowing the person to exhale after each breath. If the victim is a small child or baby, blow into their lungs at the rate of 20 times per minute but with shallower breaths. This should be continued until the victim is breathing on his own or the ambulance arrives.

The second thing to do to help the victim is to stop or slow down any bleeding. Most bleeding can be stopped by direct pressure, that is, by putting pressure directly on the wound. Use a piece of cloth (or even your bare hand if necessary. If blood is spurting, do not run around searching for surgically clean bandages or cloths. A soiled cloth or a dirty hand is acceptable in this emergency). Press down on the wound to stop the bleeding. If possible, bandage the wound. If the direct pressure method does not work, then you will have to find the proper pressure point to slow down bleeding.

The third most important thing you can do for the victim is to treat him for shock. Shock is the body's way of reacting to an injury by reducing blood flow and upsetting other body functions. The body will go into shock after almost any accident but the degree of shock is determined by the severity of the injury. No matter what the injury is, treat all victims for shock. (Shock is a form of fainting.) If the person is unconscious, make certain his or her tongue is not obstructing the breathing passage. If possible lay him down and if there are no head injuries, raise his feet slightly by placing something under them. Cover the victim to keep him warm and if he is conscious, keep him quiet and talk to him to keep him calm.

If there were no one else around to go for help, now would be the time to leave the victim and call the police. By explaining to them what has happened and where the victim is, they will arrange for emergency service. Once this is done, you should return to the victim, ensuring that his condition remains stable, until the emergency service arrives.

REMEMBER: Make sure the victim is breathing, stop the bleeding and treat for shock.

'If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His eyes...I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians for I am the Lord who heals you.'
Exodus 15:26

The children of Israel grew impatient and spoke against God. God, in turn, sent poisonous snakes among them and many died. When they repented, He, in love, spared their lives. Moses set up a brass snake and whoever looked at the brass snake lived. God has prepared an antidote for the poison of sin in our lives. We look to Jesus and live. He is the first and the last aid for all of our needs.

OBJECTIVES
UNIT 4—FIRST AID

Recruit

1. Define 'First Aid'

2. Demonstrate the correct method for treating each of the following:
   A. Bruise
   B. Small Cut
   C. Nosebleed
   D. Minor Burns

Camper

1. State the three main things to check when administering First Aid and demonstrate the treatment for each.

2. Demonstrate the correct method for treating each of the following:
   A. Insect Bites
   B. Blisters
   C. Splinters
   D. Burns
   E. Bleeding from Large Wounds
   F. Fainting
   G. Internal Poisoning
   H. External Poisoning
   I. Sprain
   J. Sunstroke
   K. Ticks