

Healthcare Protocol *Adult Life-threatening Medical Protocol*

Life threatening condition	Action	Comment
Cannot catch breath or severe shortness of breath	Call 911 for transport to hospital.	Keep client calm and protect from injury. Have someone wait outside door to direct ambulance personnel inside if possible.
Heart Attack Warning signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chest discomfort. Most heart attacks involve discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes, or that goes away and comes back. It can feel like uncomfortable pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain. • Discomfort in other areas of the upper body. Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach. • Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort. • Other signs may include breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea, or lightheadedness 	Call 911 for transport to hospital. Send someone to get AED if available.	Check the time the signs first began so you can tell EMS what time the signs began. If not allergic, give client an aspirin while awaiting ambulance.
Stroke Warning Signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body • Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding • Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes • Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination • Sudden, severe headache with no known cause 	Call 911 for transport to hospital.	Check the time the signs first began so you can tell EMS what time the signs began. Keep client calm and protect from injury.
Bleeding in pulsating spurts or large amount of bleeding	Call 911 for transport to hospital.	Have client lie down. Put on gloves to protect yourself from the blood & hold pressure over the bleeding area, to slow/stop the bleeding.
Broken bone protruding out of skin	Call 911 for transport to hospital.	Have client lie down. Do not move broken area.
Client does not respond to shake and shout maneuver	Call 911 for transport to hospital. Get AED if available.	Assess client to see if he/she is breathing. Perform CPR if needed while awaiting ambulance.
Client was hit in head and is unable to respond or response is limited	Do not shake or move client, call 911 for transport to hospital.	Protect neck and spine area from movement. See is client is breathing. Move client only if necessary to perform CPR while waiting for ambulance or to remove from danger.
Client diabetic and is either: disoriented or unable to respond	Call 911 for transport to hospital	If sugar containing icing or other emergency source of sugar is available, may try small amount between teeth and cheek area for low blood sugar. <i>Do not</i> put liquid into the mouth if person is not able to speak plainly to you.
Seizures	Call 911 for transport to hospital	Protect client from harm by moving items away to avoid client hitting items during seizure activity. Have client lie down. <i>Do not</i> place a stick, spoon, or any other object in the client's mouth. It is common for persons to be confused after a seizure.

Life threatening condition	Action	Comment
Broken Bone (Same as Fracture)	<p>A fracture is a broken bone. It requires medical attention. Call 911:</p> <p>If the broken bone is the result of major trauma or injury, if there is heavy bleeding, if gentle pressure or movement causes pain, if the limb or joint appears deformed, if the bone has pierced the skin, if the extremity of the injured arm or leg, such as a toe or finger, is numb or bluish at the tip. Also, call 911:</p> <p>If you suspect a bone is broken in the neck, head or back or if you suspect a bone is broken in the hip, pelvis or upper leg (for example, the leg and foot turn outward abnormally).</p>	<p>Don't move the person except if necessary to avoid further injury. Take these actions immediately while waiting for medical help: Stop any bleeding. Apply pressure to the wound with a sterile bandage, a clean cloth or a clean piece of clothing. Immobilize the injured area. Don't try to realign the bone or push a bone that's sticking out back in. If you've been trained in how to splint and professional help isn't readily available, apply a splint to the area above and below the fracture sites. Padding the splints can help reduce discomfort. Apply ice packs to limit swelling and help relieve pain until emergency personnel arrive. Don't apply ice directly to the skin — wrap the ice in a towel, piece of cloth or some other material.</p>

References

- American Heart Association. (2009). Heart Attack, Stroke and Cardiac Arrest Warning Signs. Retrieved April 7, 2009, from <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3053>
- Bonin, E., Brehove, T., Kline, S., Misgen, M., Post, P., Strehlow, A., & Yungman, J. (2004). *Health Care for the Homeless Clinicians' Network*, National Health Care for the Homeless Council, Retrieved September 29, 2007, from http://www.guideline.gov/summary/summary.aspx?doc_id=5272&nbr=003599&string=HIV+AND+homeless
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