



## Road Safety Initiative (U)

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### Accidents and First Aid

#### Safety message to the general public

- Include road safety in health and disease prevention activities.
- Set goals for the elimination of unacceptable health losses arising from road traffic crashes.
- Systematically collect health related data on the magnitude, implementation monitoring and evaluation of effective interventions, including improved care.
- Promote capacity building in all areas of and management of survivors of road traffic crashes.
- Translate effective science-based information into policies and practices that protect vehicle occupants and vulnerable road users.
- Strengthen pre-hospital and hospital care as well as rehabilitation services for all trauma victims.
- Develop trauma care skills of medical personnel at primary, district and tertiary health care levels.
- Promote the integration of health/safety concerns into transport policies and develop methods to facilitate the assessments.
- Campaign for greater attention to road safety, based on the known health impact and costs to the economy.

### Accidents

While accidents are not strictly a security issue, they are mentioned in this Guide because of the large number of humanitarian staff killed and injured while driving. Great effort should be made to ensure safe driving, and well-maintained vehicles, so that accidents are avoided as far as possible.

#### Once an accident has occurred:

- Stop quickly and safely. Pull off the road if it is safe to do so.
- Note: in some cultures it is not safe to stop if you have just been involved in an accident, since onlookers are likely to beat or even kill the occupants of any vehicle they think has caused the accident. In these cases it is normal to drive on, even if there have been casualties, and seek help from the police or other responsible authority. But in many cultures it is imperative to stop immediately, indeed is a criminal offence not to do so.
- Prevent further danger. It is vital to prevent further danger to passengers, onlookers and other road users, after an accident has happened. This may involve:
  - Removing from vehicles any passengers who are in imminent danger
  - Putting out warning signs. Warning triangles should be placed far in front of the accident, facing towards oncoming traffic in both directions. If a warning triangle is

not available, improvise an alternative (e.g. place a person there to signal to traffic, or use a warning known to local people, such as twigs and leaves on the road).

- Putting out a fire, or preventing a fire if one is likely (e.g. if there has been a fuel spill)
  - Directing traffic past the accident, if necessary
  - Directing pedestrians and any onlookers out of the way of traffic and other hazards
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- Give first aid to any who need it
  - Call an ambulance if necessary, or if an ambulance is not available, make other arrangements to take casualties to the nearest emergency medical facility, perhaps using your own vehicle
  - Call the police
  - Take the names and addresses of any witnesses
  - Exchange contact details with any other parties involved in the accident
  - If you have a camera, take photographs of the positions of the vehicles after the accident, and any other relevant items, if doing so will not antagonise bystanders
  - On the arrival of the police, cooperate fully with them
  - Show courtesy and respect to all parties. If anyone has been injured in the accident, even if the fault was not yours, consider visiting them and/or their family, bringing a small present if appropriate. This helps to build local goodwill and can therefore be helpful to your security.
  - After the incident, make a detailed record of it. Identify any lessons to learn, and ensure that any necessary changes in procedures are made. If disciplinary action is appropriate, ensure that it is taken swiftly and fairly. Proper accountability is particularly important relating to road accidents, because of the large numbers of deaths and injuries they cause.
  - Record the incident in your note book.

## First Aid

### Provide emergency care

Remember the letters DR A B C:

**D - Danger** - check that you are not in danger.

**R - Response** - try to get a response by asking questions and gently shaking their shoulders.

**A - Airway** - the airway should be clear and kept open. Place one hand on the forehead, two fingers under the chin and gently tilt the head back.

**B - Breathing** - normal breathing should be established. Once the airway is open check breathing for up to 10 seconds.

**C - Compressions** - if they are not breathing normally compressions should be administered to maintain circulation; place two hands in the centre of the chest and press down 4-5 cm at a rate of 100/minute. You may only need one hand for a child. Give 30 chest compressions. Then tilt the head back gently, pinch the casualty's nostrils together and place your mouth over theirs. Give two breaths, each lasting one second (use gentle breaths for a small child).

### **Bleeding:**

First check for anything that may be in the wound, such as glass. If there is nothing embedded apply firm pressure over the wound. Take care not to press on the object - build up padding on either side of it.

Fasten a pad to the wound with a bandage or length of cloth. Use the cleanest material available. If a limb is bleeding, but not broken, raise it above the level of the heart to reduce the flow of blood. Any restriction of blood circulation for more than a short time could cause long-term injuries.

### **Burns:**

Try to cool the burn by dousing it with clean, cold water or similar non-toxic liquid for at least 10 minutes. Do not try to remove anything sticking to the burn.

**5. Be prepared:** Always carry a first aid kit. You could save a life by learning emergency aid and first aid from a qualified organisation.