

Advice for First Aiders in the event of an Injury/Accident during COVID 19

This document needs to be read in conjunction with the Latest FA Guidance on First Aid - <https://www.thefa.com/-/media/thefacom-new/files/get-involved/2021/first-aid-guidance-for-returning-to-competitive-grassroots-football---24-march-2021.ashx>

Depending on the type of incident – wearing gloves goes without saying as all first aiders know, but it also breaks 2m distancing e.g. in a simple first aid cut etc – point to first aid kit and advise what to do – clean it view from distance and cover it appropriately – therefore not touching anything.

As a first aider, in addition to high quality clinical skills, to be effective you need to:

- Be aware of the risks to yourself and others
- Keep yourself safe
- Give early treatment
- Keep yourself informed and updated
- Remember your own needs

In the current climate with the prevalence of the COVID-19 pandemic, these skills become even more important and here is how you can apply these skills when managing a first aid incident.

1. Be aware of the risks to yourself and others

When approaching a casualty there is always a risk of cross contamination – especially when you may have to get close to the casualty to assess what is wrong or to check their breathing. It is always important to be aware of the risks of how this cross contamination has occurred. According to NHS 111 we do not know exactly how coronavirus spreads from person to person but similar viruses are spread in cough droplets.

2. Keep yourself safe

In line with government advice, make sure you wash your hands or use an alcohol gel, before and after treating a casualty also ensure that you don't cough or sneeze over a casualty when you are treating them.

Don't lose sight of other cross contamination that could occur that isn't related to COVID-19.

- Wear gloves or cover hands when dealing with open wounds
- Cover cuts and grazes on your hands with waterproof dressing
- Dispose of all waste safely
- Do not touch a wound with your bare hand
- Do not touch any part of a dressing that will come in contact with a wound.

3. Give early treatment

The vast majority of incidents do not involve you getting close to a casualty where you would come into contact with cough droplets. Sensible precautions will ensure you are able to treat a casualty effectively.

4. Keep yourself informed and updated

As this is a new disease this is an ever changing situation and the government and NHS are continually updating their advice. Make sure that you regularly review the NHS 111 or Gov.uk website which has a specific section on Coronavirus.

5. Remember your own needs

These are challenging and uncertain times for all. The COVID-19 outbreak has meant a lot of upheaval and worry for people. In order to help others you will also need to look after your own needs. Make sure you take time to talk about your fears and concerns with someone you trust and to take out time to look after yourself.

Use and dispose of all PPE according to the instructions and training previously provided by your employer or organisation. Disposable gloves and fluid repellent surgical face mask is recommended and, if available, disposable plastic apron and disposable eye protection (such as face visor or goggles) should be worn. Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before putting on and after taking off PPE.

6. CPR

If you are required to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), you should conduct a "dynamic risk assessment" and adopt appropriate precautions for infection control.

Where possible, it is recommended that you do not perform rescue breaths or mouth-to-mouth ventilation; perform chest compressions only. Resuscitation Council (UK) Guidelines 2010 for Basic Life Support state that studies have shown that compression-only CPR may be as effective as combined ventilation and compression in the first few minutes after non-asphyxial arrest (cardiac arrest due to lack of oxygen).

If a decision is made to perform mouth-to-mouth ventilation in asphyxial arrest, use a resuscitation face shield where available.

Should you have given mouth-to-mouth ventilation there are no additional actions to be taken other than to monitor yourself for symptoms of possible COVID-19 over the following 14 days. Should you develop such symptoms you should follow the advice on what to do on the [NHS website](#).