

## **Ten steps to take in an emergency**

**1. CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY.** Most people say they will call 9-1-1 when faced with a real emergency, but sometimes they don't. Why? They may not want to "bother" anyone, or they're worried that the situation isn't really an emergency. Instead, they call their pediatrician, the emergency room, or some other health care professional.

You should know that the time spent waiting for a doctor to return your call could make a big difference to your child's life. Advice given over the phone is not always correct. The fact is, no one can tell what's wrong without first seeing the patient. That's why it's important to get your child in front of a health care professional as soon as possible. We recommend that you don't drive to the hospital yourself unless you really have to. If you must drive, choose a hospital that serves children, if possible. Remember, it's usually faster, safer, and smarter to call 9-1-1.

**2. CALL POISON CONTROL IMMEDIATELY.** A poison can hurt your child if he or she swallows it, breathes it in, or splashes it on the skin or in the eyes. Get expert help by calling the Poison Control Center right away. The number is 1-800-222-1222, 24 hours a day.

**3. IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY INJURED, DO NOT MOVE YOUR CHILD.** In a case such as a car crash or a really bad fall, moving your child could result in permanent injury. Unless your child is in further danger, keep him or her warm, still, and awake, if possible, until help arrives.

**4. KNOW HOW TO TREAT YOUR CHILD IN CASE OF A BURN.** For minor burns without blisters, soak the burned area in cold water until the pain is gone. DO NOT use ice, butter, petroleum jelly, or other home cures. For burns with blisters, call your doctor right away. For large and/or deep burns, call 9-1-1. Keep your child warm and still until help arrives.

**5. BE PREPARED IF YOUR CHILD HAS A SEIZURE.** If your child is not breathing, begin rescue breathing and have somebody call 9-1-1. If you don't know how to perform rescue breathing, the emergency operator can tell you what to do. If your child is breathing, turn your child on his or her side. Help protect your child from further harm by moving objects out of the way. DO NOT prop up your child's head or put anything in your child's mouth.

**6. KNOW WHAT TO DO IF YOUR CHILD IS BLEEDING.** For really bad wounds or spurting blood, call 9-1-1 right away. Have your child lie down and apply firm, direct pressure to the wound. If the pad becomes soaked, put another one on top of it. DO NOT use tourniquets. If possible, raise the wound higher than your child's heart.

**7. KNOW HOW TO HELP A CHILD WITH A BROKEN BONE.** Call 9-1-1 immediately. Try to keep the injured limb from moving. Apply cold compresses to minimize swelling (NOT ICE). If a bone is sticking out from the skin, cover it with a

large bandage, but DO NOT try to push it back in. If there is a lot of bleeding, use direct pressure around the area. DO NOT try to move your child unless he or she is in immediate danger.

**8. DO NOT ADMINISTER THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER OR CPR UNLESS YOU ARE TRAINED.** Call 9-1-1 right away. The emergency operator can tell you how to help your child until help arrives.

**9. HAVE YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN ON HAND.** Be prepared to give emergency medical personnel important information. Use the emergency plan you have created to write down everything you will need.

**10. MAKE IT EASY FOR EMERGENCY PERSONNEL TO FIND YOU.**

Turn on all the lights in your house. Have someone wait outside, if possible, to show fire, police, or emergency medical personnel where your child is.

**Be prepared.**

We hope you will keep printed copies of these pages handy as a quick reference in case of an emergency. We urge you to complete your emergency plan included here . Ask your pediatrician or health care provider to help you complete a plan for each of your children. If your child has a serious health problem, you may want to use the American Academy of Pediatrics' detailed Emergency Information Form at [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). If you would like to learn more about being prepared, please visit Emergency Medical Services for Children (<http://www.ems-c.org>).