

Order\_Of\_Priority\_In\_An\_Emergency\_1991.txt  
SECTION I

ORDER OF PRIORITY  
IN AN EMERGENCY

In EVERY emergency situation, there is a logical order to be followed. First, it is important to carefully assess the scene of an emergency BEFORE any further steps are taken. The purpose of this assessment is to assure it is safe to provide first aid care. For example, an unconscious victim might be lying on a live power line. If a rescuer were to touch the victim before the power could be shut off, the rescuer would become a victim as well! Always be sure it is safe before you attempt to help a victim!

Once you determine it is safe for you to help a victim, you should immediately determine if the victim is threatened by life threatening conditions.

Begin by checking to see if the victim is responsive. If the victim is prone, kneel and ask, " ARE YOU OK?" If there is no response, you must immediately do a PRIMARY SURVEY which is intended to identify life-threatening conditions!

First, if there are bystanders on the scene, summon someone to your side to provide assistance.

If the victim is on his stomach, first place the victim's arm closest to you above his head. Then turn him over by placing one hand on the victim's hip and the other hand at the victim's shoulder. Turn the body in a smooth, even straight line so as to not cause further injury in the event of existing spinal cord injury.

With the victim now on his back, OPEN THE VICTIM'S AIRWAY by

placing the heel of your hand on the victim's forehead and the tips of your fingers under the bony part of the jaw.

Push down on the forehead while lifting up the chin until the jaw is pointing straight up. Now place your ear over the victim's mouth and LOOK, LISTEN & FEEL for breathing for 3 to 5 seconds. LOOK at the chest to see if it is rising, LISTEN for sounds of breathing and FEEL for air coming from the victim.

If the victim is not breathing, RESCUE BREATHING is required immediately!

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IMPORTANT

WHILE THIS TUTORIAL IDENTIFIES LIFE THREATENING CONDITIONS  
REQUIRING RESCUE BREATHING OR CPR, THESE SKILLS REQUIRE  
INTENSIVE CLASSROOM SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND PRACTICE  
AND CANNOT BE EFFECTIVELY PRESENTED OR TAUGHT  
IN THIS TUTORIAL. THE AUTHOR  
STRONGLY ENCOURAGES EVERYONE  
TO ENROLL IN A CPR  
COURSE

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Rescue breathing will provide vital oxygen to a victim who cannot breath on their own. After giving a victim two breaths, the pulse is checked at the Carotid Artery to ascertain if the victim has a heartbeat. This artery is located on the side of the neck and is located by first positioning the fingers on the victim's Adam's Apple, then sliding the fingers down into the soft groove on the side of the neck. The pulse is checked for 5 to 10 seconds.

If the victim has a heartbeat, but is not breathing, RESCUE BREATHING is required. If the victim is NOT breathing AND does not

have a HEARTBEAT, CPR is required without delay!

These initial steps of checking the AIRWAY, BREATHING and CIRCULATION (pulse), together with a check for major BLEEDING, constitute THE PRIMARY SURVEY, which looks for life-threatening conditions!

AFTER the PRIMARY SURVEY is completed, and life threatening conditions identified, a bystander should be dispatched to call EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (911 or other emergency number in your community) while a suitably-trained rescuer begins appropriate emergency treatment!

In every instance where first aid is to be provided, it is important to always ask a conscious victim for permission to help them. If a victim is unconscious, it is presumed they have provided consent for you to assist them.