



First Aid

As you get older, you may be asked to take charge of more things in many different areas of life. You'll be on your own more often—which means you need to know what to do if people around you get sick or hurt. Find out how to deal with minor injuries and illnesses and how to tell when the problem is more serious by earning this badge.

Steps

1. Know how to use everything in a first aid kit
2. Understand how to prevent and respond to choking emergencies
3. Find out how to handle outdoor musculoskeletal injuries
4. Learn how to recognize and respond to seizures
5. Learn to prevent and treat temperature-related health emergencies

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to help take care of people in an emergency.



Step 1: Know how to use everything in a first aid kit

A first aid kit contains everything you need to treat most minor injuries. But how do you use gauze, anyway? And what do you do with that triangle-shaped bandage? Know how to use each piece of a first aid kit, and how to tell a minor injury from a more serious condition, by completing a choice below.

Choices—do one:

.....
Talk to a nurse or doctor. You might visit your school nurse or a doctor at a local clinic. Ask them to show you how to use each piece of a first aid kit, then practice it yourself.

.....
Talk to an emergency medical technician (EMT). Invite an EMT to visit your troop and teach you to use the different pieces of a first aid kit. Divide into pairs and practice using items in the kit on each other.

.....
Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course. Find one that includes information on using a first aid kit.



AED stands for **automated external defibrillator**. An AED is a machine that analyzes someone's heartbeat. It can give the heart an electric shock to restart it if needed.



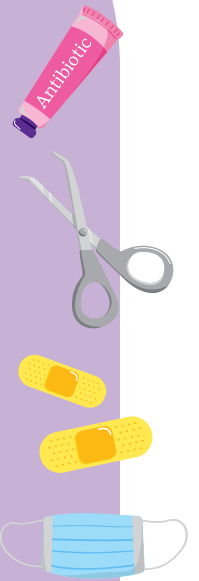
CPR stands for **cardiopulmonary resuscitation**. It is an emergency procedure performed on someone whose heart has stopped beating.



Make Your Own First Aid Kit

First aid kits for a family should include the following:

- Latex-free disposable gloves
- Antibiotic and hydrocortisone ointments
- Aspirin
- Scissors and tweezers
- An assortment of adhesive bandages, gauze, and adhesive cloth tape
- Oral thermometer (disposable)
- Face mask or other breathing barrier
- Survival blanket



Personalize Your Kit

Discuss your family's special health needs, if any, with an adult. Together, create or stock a family first aid kit to meet these needs.

Be sure to include:

- Personal medications, if any
- Family medication list
- Emergency phone numbers and contact information
- Information on any allergies
- Any other items recommended by your doctor



Keep your kit up to date by:

- Checking expiration dates and replacing used or out-of-date contents
- Making sure thermometer batteries work



Step 2: Understand how to prevent and respond to choking emergencies

Imagine you're sitting in a restaurant or school cafeteria. Or maybe you're at the movies. What should you do if someone suddenly starts choking on popcorn or another food? Find out how to respond to a choking emergency, no matter where or to whom it occurs.

Choices—do one:

Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course. Make sure the class covers choking emergencies. Most babysitting classes also cover choking. They are a good option if you plan to babysit.

Ask a medical professional. Learn the conscious choking response (used when someone is conscious but cannot cough, speak, or breathe) from a nurse, doctor, or EMT. Find out what to do if a choking victim becomes unconscious, including whether you should handle the problem yourself by starting CPR or find someone with more experience.

Learn about choking hazards. Babies and young toddlers are not yet skilled eaters. They also tend to put non-food items into their mouths. For both of these reasons, this age group is especially prone to choking. Read about common choking hazards. Make a chart showing ten dangerous items and explain how to keep these items away from babies and young toddlers.



Conscious Choking Response

This procedure is used when an adult choking victim is conscious but cannot cough, speak, or breathe. Only trained people should perform it.

1. Verify the person is choking.

This means they cannot cough, cry, speak, or breathe. If the person can speak or is coughing, encourage them to keep coughing.

2. Give five back blows.

Bend the person forward at the waist and provide support with one hand. Give five back blows between the shoulder blades with the heel of the other hand.

3. Give five abdominal thrusts.

Place a fist with the thumb side against the middle of the person's abdomen, just above the navel. Cover the fist with your other hand. Give five quick, upward, forceful abdominal thrusts.

4. Continue care.

Give sets of five back blows and five abdominal thrusts until the object is forced out, the person can cough forcefully or breathe, or the person becomes unconscious, at which point start CPR.



Careers to Explore

- Pharmaceutical researcher
- Veterinary
- Physical therapist
- First aid instructor
- Nursing aide
- Girl Scout camp counselor
- Paramedic
- Pharmacist
- Dentist
- Doctor
- Athletic trainer
- Massage therapist
- Nutritionist
- Chiropractor
- Wilderness guide

Step 3: Find out how to handle outdoor musculoskeletal injuries

What do you do if someone breaks a leg while you're hiking in the mountains? Or how do you help someone who has pulled a muscle, dislocated a shoulder, or sprained an ankle? Find out how to deal with musculoskeletal emergencies that occur outdoors.

Choices—do one:

Interview a first-aider. Find a certified wilderness first-aider through your local Girl Scout council. Interview the first-aider to learn how to treat musculoskeletal injuries when they happen, how you can get help if someone is injured, and what to do while you're waiting for help to arrive.

Invite a wilderness expert to a troop meeting. Ask a park ranger, park educator, or member of a wilderness search-and-rescue squad to talk to your troop about common injuries. Have them demonstrate first aid techniques, then practice these skills.

Find out about common injuries. Go online and research injuries suffered by people participating in an outdoor activity you enjoy, such as hiking, riding a bike, or skiing. Give a short presentation to the troop on your chosen activity, the injuries associated with it, and what to do if these injuries occur.



Survival Blanket

A survival blanket—also called a solar, first aid, or thermal blanket—could save your life in an emergency. These blankets were first developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for use in space. They're made by coating a thin sheet of plastic with a shiny substance that reflects body heat back into the body. If a person is injured on a hiking trip, a survival blanket can keep them warm while other people go for help. The blanket may also be used to wrap a person who has fallen into cold water or to stay warm if the temperature drops suddenly on an overnight camping trip.

Musculoskeletal:

Involving the bones, muscles, and related parts such as tendons, ligaments, and cartilage

Most injuries can be prevented through careful planning and attention to safety procedures. Still, accidents happen. Always be prepared for the unexpected.



Sprain Savvy

What should you do if someone (you or a friend) sprains an ankle while hiking or doing another outdoor activity? Simple sprains don't usually require a 911 call. Follow these steps to take care of the ankle until you can obtain medical care.

1. REST

Have the person limit the use of the injured body part.

2. IMMOBILIZE

If the person must move or be moved (for instance, to hike out of the wilderness), splint the injured body part to protect it. The injured area should be stabilized in the position in which you found it.

3. Apply COLD

Whenever the person is not moving, apply a cold pack (ice in a plastic bag or wrapped in a damp cloth). Apply the cold pack to the injured area for up to 20 minutes at a time. Remove it for at least 20 minutes and then repeat if necessary. Always keep a barrier, such as plastic or cloth, between ice and bare skin to reduce the risk of damaging skin and other soft tissue.



4. Apply COMPRESSION

If you're trained, you can use a compression wrap to make an injured person more comfortable, particularly with an ankle sprain or strain. First, check for circulation or sensation beyond the injured area. Then apply a cold pack as instructed in Step 3. After 20 minutes of ice, dry off the area and apply the compression wrap.



Remember:

Even though a sprain isn't considered a medical emergency, the injured person may need help with mobility, especially if they're far out in nature. Don't hesitate to call for help if it's needed.

Step 4: Learn how to recognize and respond to seizures

A seizure is a sudden, uncontrolled burst of electrical activity in the brain. It can cause changes in movement, behavior, awareness, and level of consciousness. In this step, you'll learn how to recognize seizures and find out what to do if they occur.

Choices—do one:

.....
Learn how to recognize different types of seizures.

Go online and research seizures to learn about the different types, as well as their signs and symptoms.

.....
Interview a doctor, nurse, or EMT about seizures.

Find out how you can help someone who's having a seizure, including when it's necessary to call 911 and what not to do.

.....
Practice first aid seizure care. Talk to a medical professional about first aid seizure care. Learn specific techniques, then practice these skills with family or friends.



CHECK-CALL-CARE

In case of seizures or any first aid emergency, don't forget to **CHECK-CALL-CARE**:



CHECK

your surroundings for safety, and **CHECK** the hurt person to assess their condition.



CALL

for help, if needed and possible. Either get a first aid kit and AED yourself or send someone to do it.



CARE

for the person by providing first aid or other assistance.



Not all wounds are visible.

Check out the Girl Scouts Mental Wellness patch program and learn to take care of your mind as well as your body.

Step 5: Learn to prevent and treat temperature-related health emergencies

Whether you're walking home in the depths of winter or hanging out on the beach on a summer day, extreme temperatures can be dangerous. Learn the signs of heat stroke, frostbite, hypothermia, and hyperthermia, and how to treat them.

Choices—do one:

Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course. Find one that covers the warning signs and basic care for minor heat- and cold-related injuries.

Ask a park ranger, lifeguard, or ski patrol member. Talk about how to recognize the warning signs of heat- or cold-related injuries, how you can care for minor cases, and how to know when you need to get help.

Interview a doctor or nurse. Ask about how to recognize the warning signs of heat- or cold-related injuries, how you can care for minor cases, and how to know when you need to get help.



Hypothermia

Hypothermia (lowered body temperature) occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. This can happen when wind, moisture, and cool temperatures draw heat away from the body at a rapid rate. Typically a person experiencing hypothermia has been exposed to cold air temperatures, cold water, or both.



Hyperthermia and Heat Stroke

Hyperthermia (raised body temperature) occurs when the body gains heat faster than it can release it. It is not the same thing as fever, which is the body's deliberate response to illness or infection. Doing strenuous physical activity in hot weather is a main cause of hyperthermia. Hyperthermia can lead to heat stroke, a life-threatening emergency in which the body's cooling system becomes completely overwhelmed and stops working.

Being prepared is one of the best ways to prevent both hypothermia and hyperthermia. Make sure to dress appropriately for the weather. Avoid getting wet in cold conditions; rest often in hot conditions. Drink plenty of warm or cool liquids, whichever the conditions require. Simple steps like these can go a long way toward keeping you healthy and safe.



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Volunteer's Guide to the Cadette First Aid Badge*

Find tips and ideas to help guide your troop through this badge.

NOTE: Some choices involve visiting facilities or talking to professionals. One facility visit can cover several steps. Also consider combining activities (for instance, tour a facility and then interview someone who works there to satisfy two steps).

Step 1: Know how to use everything in a first aid kit • 30–40 minutes

Ask: Do you know how to use everything in a first aid kit?

Share: A first aid kit includes everything you need to treat minor injuries. Let's learn how to use the contents of a typical first aid kit correctly so you can be ready to help.

Choices—do one:

- **Talk to a nurse or doctor.** Visit a clinic or invite a nurse or a doctor to a meeting to explain the different components of a first aid kit and show Cadettes how to use them. Ask in advance if the speaker will guide Cadettes to practice using certain items and, if so, whether you need to have those supplies on hand.
Materials: *requested supplies, if any*
- **Talk to an emergency medical technician (EMT).** Invite an EMT to a meeting to explain the different components of a first aid kit and show Cadettes how to use them. Ask in advance if the speaker will guide Cadettes to practice using certain items and, if so, whether you need to have those supplies on hand.
Materials: *requested supplies, if any*
- **Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course.** Search online to find a local First Aid/CPR/AED course. Enroll your troop and attend the training.
Materials: *none*

Step 2: Understand how to prevent and respond to choking emergencies • 30–40 minutes (more if taking a course)

Ask: What should you do if someone near you begins to choke? How do you recognize and prevent choking?

Share: Choking occurs when something (usually food) gets stuck in a person's throat or windpipe, blocking the flow of air to the lungs. It is a medical emergency that can cause death within minutes. There may not be time for professional help to arrive, so it's important to know what to do if this emergency strikes.

Choices—do one:

- **Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course.** Search online to find a local First Aid/CPR/AED course or babysitting course, whichever your troop prefers. Make sure the course you choose includes instruction on choking emergencies. Enroll your troop and attend the training.
Materials: *none*
- **Ask a medical professional.** Invite a medical professional to a meeting to teach Cadettes the conscious choking response for adults, as well as what to do if a choking victim becomes unconscious. Make sure to include time for practice.
Materials: *none*
- **Learn about choking hazards.** Have Cadettes research and make a list of the ten most common choking hazards for babies and toddlers. Then, have them give a short presentation describing these items and how to keep babies and toddlers safe from them. You could have Cadettes present one item each if the troop is small enough, or split Cadettes into pairs for larger troops.
Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets; paper; pencils or pens*

Step 3: Find out how to handle outdoor musculoskeletal injuries • 20–30 minutes

Ask: What should you do if someone breaks a leg, sprains an ankle, or gets another musculoskeletal injury while doing an outdoor activity?

*Detailed choice activities, meeting tools, and additional resources and materials can be found within the Volunteer Toolkit on my.girlscouts.org.

Share: When you're outdoors and active, accidents sometimes happen. You or someone you know might sprain an ankle, dislocate a shoulder, or even break a bone. It's important to know what to do in these medical emergencies.

Choices—do one:

● **Interview a first-aid.** Find a certified wilderness first-aid for Cadettes to interview. (Your Girl Scout council may be able to help you find this resource.) Have Cadettes ask the first-aid about musculoskeletal injuries, how to treat them, how to get help, and what to do while waiting for help to arrive. Help them brainstorm questions in advance.

Materials: *none*

● **Invite a wilderness expert to a troop meeting.** Invite a park ranger, park educator, wilderness search-and-rescue squad member, or another expert to a meeting to talk about musculoskeletal injuries. Have them demonstrate techniques using Cadette volunteers, then guide the troop in practicing these skills.

Materials: *none*

● **Find out about common injuries.** Have each Cadette research musculoskeletal injuries common to an outdoor activity of their choice, then give a short presentation to the troop about what they learned.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*

Step 4: Learn how to recognize and respond to seizures • 20–30 minutes

Ask: Do you know what a seizure is? Would you know how to recognize one and how to help?

Share: Seizures are sudden, uncontrolled bursts of electrical activity in the brain. There are different types of seizures. Some are very mild and might just seem like confusion; others are more severe and cause alarming symptoms like shaking, falling over, and loss of consciousness. In this step, you'll learn how to recognize seizures and find out what to do if they occur.

Choices—do one:

● **Learn how to recognize different types of seizures.** Have Cadettes go online and research different types of seizures on an authoritative website, such as one belonging to a medical organization or a foundation that specializes in seizure care. Then moderate a roundtable discussion where Cadettes discuss what they learned.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*

● **Interview a doctor, nurse, or EMT about seizures.**

Arrange for Cadettes to interview a doctor, nurse, or EMT about seizures, including when to call 911 and what not to do. Help Cadettes come up with questions in advance.

Materials: *none*

● **Practice first aid seizure care.** Invite a medical professional to a meeting to talk about seizure care. Have them demonstrate techniques using Cadette volunteers, then guide the troop in practicing these skills.

Materials: *none*

Step 5: Learn to prevent and treat temperature-related health emergencies • 20–30 minutes (more if taking a course)

Ask: Have you ever felt too hot or too cold? What do you think would happen if you couldn't cool down or warm up, and these feelings got worse?

Share: You can prepare for extreme temperatures—either heat or cold—with the proper clothing, equipment, food, and drinks. But even with the best preparation, it's possible to get overheated or chilled. If you can't cool down or warm up, the feelings can get worse and worse, and they can become very dangerous—even life-threatening. Let's find out how to prevent and treat temperature-related health emergencies.

Choices—do one:

● **Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course.** Search online to find a local First Aid/CPR/AED course. These courses include instruction on temperature-related health emergencies. Enroll your troop and attend the training.

Materials: *none*

● **Ask a park ranger, lifeguard, or ski patrol member.** Park rangers, lifeguards, and ski patrol members work outdoors in hot and cold conditions. Invite one of these professionals to a meeting to talk about heat- and cold-related emergencies, how to recognize them, and how to help. Encourage Cadettes to share any personal experiences they've had with temperature-related health emergencies, if they feel comfortable doing so.

Materials: *none*

● **Interview a doctor or nurse.** Arrange for Cadettes to interview a doctor or nurse about temperature-related health emergencies. Help Cadettes come up with questions in advance.

Materials: *none*

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