



First Aid

As a Senior Girl Scout, you're on the go—home, school, clubs, activities. If you encountered an emergency medical situation while out and about, would you know what to do? By earning this badge, you'll find out how to differentiate between minor and major injuries, provide emergency treatment in some life-threatening situations, and share important information about injuries and illnesses.

Steps

1. Learn how to help a person with a head, neck, or spinal injury
2. Learn how to use everyday objects to make splints
3. Learn the signs of drug overdose and alcohol poisoning
4. Learn how to identify and care for life-threatening bleeding
5. Share your knowledge with others

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to give first aid for life-threatening injuries and illnesses.



Tip Before Takeoff

When you've earned this badge, you'll be able to help people in serious situations. But you can actually hurt the people you're trying to help if you don't have top-notch first aid skills. For that reason, it is strongly recommended that you take a First Aid/CPR/AED course as part of this badge (in Step 1 or 2) if you don't already have that certification or if a previous certification has expired.



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.

Step 1: Learn how to help a person with a head, neck, or spinal injury

Head, neck, and spinal injuries require special care and can complicate CPR (giving chest compressions and breaths). These injuries should always be handled by a trained, qualified adult. In an emergency, though, you might not have an expert on hand. Find out how you can assist a person until help arrives, including how to avoid making the injury worse.

Choices—do one:

Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course. Find one from a healthcare or community organization that covers head, neck, and spinal injuries.

Take a lifeguarding course. Find one that covers head, neck, and spinal injuries. Note: You must be at least 15 years old to take a lifeguarding course.

Talk to a professional. Ask a doctor, nurse, or qualified first responder to show you how to care for head, neck, and spinal injuries.

Concussions



A concussion is a brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. The impact shakes the brain inside the skull. This motion can damage cells and affect brain function. A person with a concussion may experience headache, dizziness, blurred vision, vomiting, cognitive problems, or other symptoms. Weeks or even months of physical and mental rest (yes, that means not thinking too hard!) are needed for complete recovery.

Concussions are common in youth sports. They occur most frequently in wrestling, martial arts, cheerleading, and football. According to the National Institutes of Health, about 12 percent of high school athletes in these sports will experience at least one concussion. To reduce the risk of this traumatic brain injury, coaches and athletes should always follow proper safety procedures. If an athlete does sustain a blow to the head, concussion should always be suspected. Even mild symptoms, if ignored, can cause long-term damage. With prompt and proper care, however, most concussions are just temporary setbacks that do no lasting harm.



Step 2: Learn how to use everyday objects to make splints

While waiting for professional help to arrive, you may have to improvise as you offer help to others. You can use everyday objects to make splints, which support and protect broken bones or other injuries. Find out how in these activities.

Choices—do one:

Practice making splints. Research how to make splints from everyday objects. Then gather a variety of common materials—things you might have available at home, in a car, or in nature—and set them up at stations around a large room or outdoor space. Divide a group of friends or family into pairs and go to separate stations. Practice using the materials to make different kinds of splints. When you're finished, share your experience with the whole group.

Ask an expert. Invite an emergency first responder (such as an EMT, doctor, or nurse) to show you and your friends how to make splints, then take turns trying it out. Ask your guest to give feedback on your splints and provide tips for making a splint in the middle of an emergency.

Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course. Basic first aid skills are essential in situations where people hurt themselves enough to need a splint.

CHECK-CALL-CARE

In any emergency situation, don't forget to:



CHECK

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



CALL

for help, if needed and possible. Get a first aid kit and AED if you have them, or send someone to get them.



CARE for the person by providing first aid or other assistance.



Step 3: Learn to recognize the signs of drug overdose and alcohol poisoning

If someone has overdosed on drugs or had so much to drink that they're suffering from alcohol poisoning, that person's life could be in danger. Learn how to recognize the warning signs and how to care for the person until help arrives.

Choices—do one:

Learn about the opioid epidemic. Opioids are a class of drugs often used to fight pain. Some are legal and some are not. Overuse or abuse of these drugs has increased in recent years and can cause death. Research the opioid epidemic: Why has the use of opioids risen? What contributes to the epidemic? Who is most likely to be impacted by opioid addiction, and why? Also research the use and availability of naloxone in your community for life-threatening opioid overdoses: Why is naloxone important? When should it be used? Discuss your findings with friends or family, or journal about them if you prefer to process this information on your own.

Watch a presentation. Invite a qualified speaker to give a presentation to your group by contacting organizations that work to educate people about drunk and impaired driving. Come prepared with questions for the speaker,

such as: What is impaired driving? Who is most impacted by drunk driving? What is the best way to prevent drunk and impaired driving? What should you do if someone you know has been drinking and plans to drive?

Choose your own project or activity. Drug overdose and alcohol poisoning can be difficult subjects. Feel free to explore this topic in a way that feels comfortable to you.



Get Help

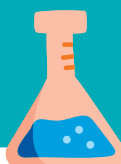
If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use disorder, help is available! Consider these resources first:

- **Trusted adults.** Ask a caregiver, school guidance counselor, or other trusted adult for help.
- **Helplines.** Free, anonymous phone helplines are available 24/7 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and other organizations.
- **Mental health professionals.** Counselors can be a big help to anyone experiencing substance use disorder.



Careers to Explore

- Pharmacy aide
- Patient health advocate
- Psychologist
- Alcohol and substance abuse counselor
- Speech therapist
- Physical education teacher
- Social worker
- Daycare owner
- Sleep technician
- Dental hygienist
- Biomedical engineer
- Public health educator
- CPR instructor
- Nurse
- Medical illustrator





Recovery Position

In situations of drug overdose or alcohol poisoning, people can choke. This can happen if the tongue relaxes and falls to the back of the mouth, blocking the airway. Choking can also occur if a person vomits while lying on their back. Use the recovery position to avoid these life-threatening developments. You should also use the recovery position if a person begins to vomit or if you need to leave a person alone while you call for help.

To move someone who is lying on their back into the recovery position on their side:

1. Extend the person's arm that is closest to you above the person's head.
2. Roll the person toward you onto their side so the person's head rests on their extended arm. (Turning the person toward you, rather than away from you, allows for more control over their movement and helps you monitor the person's airway.)
3. Bend both of the person's knees to stabilize their body.



TIP:

The recovery position is not just for situations of drug overdose and alcohol poisoning. It should be used for any health emergency in which someone is:

Unresponsive but breathing

OR

Responsive but not fully awake

AND

Has no other life-threatening conditions



Step 4: Learn how to identify and care for life-threatening bleeding

A person can die from severe blood loss in less than five minutes. Would you know what to do if faced with a life-threatening bleeding emergency? Find out in this step.

Choices—do one:

.....

Take a course in person or online. STOP THE BLEED® courses teach the skills needed to handle a life-threatening bleeding emergency.

.....

Interview a first responder about life-threatening bleeding. Find out how you can help someone who's bleeding and how to know when bleeding represents a life-threatening emergency.

.....

Create a kit for use in bleeding emergencies. Research what the kit should include. Assemble the kit and keep it in a car or your backpack for on-the-go access.

Shock

People often say they're "in shock" when something surprising happens, but the medical definition of shock refers to something much more serious. When a person is in shock, their body isn't getting enough blood flow. Shock can be caused by several things, including life-threatening bleeding from an injury; heart problems; or severe, life-threatening allergic reactions (anaphylaxis).



Know Your Limits

Knowing your limits is an important part of both providing and teaching first aid. Always remember: **Only give care you are trained to provide.** If you are speaking to younger Girl Scouts about first aid, remind them to do the same.

Why is this important? Think about water rescues, as an example, which require special knowledge and skills. If you don't have the training to safely rescue someone who is struggling in the water, you probably won't help them, and you may get into trouble yourself. Giving someone a bandage, on the other hand, is safe and appropriate at any age. Judge each situation separately and do what you can...safely and effectively.



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: Share your knowledge with others



When you can teach what you've learned, you know you truly understand a concept or skill. Teaching also gives you the chance to inspire others and make the world a better place!

Choices—do one:

Give a presentation to younger Girl Scouts. If they're working on their First Aid badge, they probably have a lot of questions. Help them out by providing a first-person account of your experiences and choices as you earned your own First Aid badge or badges.

Talk to other teens. Tell them what you've learned about drug overdoses and alcohol poisoning. Offer tips on what they should do if they're faced with an emergency related to drugs or alcohol.

Share with your community. For example, you might volunteer to assist local agencies during a Disaster Preparedness Day event, give a presentation at your school, or talk to community members about what you've learned.





Developed in collaboration with the American Red Cross.

All trademarks, trade names, or logos mentioned or used are the property of their respective owners.

TM ® & © 2023–2024 Girl Scouts of the United States of America. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical methods, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, now known or hereinafter invented, without the prior written permission of Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA), except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permissions requests, write to GSUSA at the address below or visit the www.girlscouts.org website to access permission request forms.

First published in 2024 by Girl Scouts of the United States of America,
420 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018-2798
www.girlscouts.org





Volunteer's Guide to the Senior 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: Learn how to help a person with a head, neck, or spinal injury • 30–40 minutes (more if taking a course)

Ask: Would you know what to do if someone sustained a head, neck, or spinal injury?

Share: Head, neck, and spinal injuries complicate the process of giving first aid. It's important to know how to assist an affected person until help arrives without making the injury worse. In this step, you'll learn what you can safely do without advanced training.

Choices—do one:

- **Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course.** Search online to find a local First Aid/CPR/AED course. Make sure the course you choose covers head, neck, and spinal injuries. Enroll your troop and attend the training.

Materials: none

- **Take a lifeguarding course.** Search online to find a local lifeguarding certification course. (Note that participants must be at least 15 years old.) Make sure the course covers head, neck, and spinal injuries. Enroll your troop and attend the training.

Materials: none

- **Talk to a professional.** Invite a doctor, nurse, or qualified first responder to a meeting (in person or virtually) to discuss head, neck, and spinal injuries. Ask them to explain what Seniors can do to help if these injuries occur—but also to emphasize what they should never do without professional help.

Materials: none

Step 2: Learn how to use everyday objects to make splints • 30–40 minutes (more if taking a course)

Ask: Do you know what a splint is and what it is used for? Have you ever worn one?

Share: A splint supports and protects a broken bone or other injury. It keeps the injured part still to help with pain and avoid further injury. Unlike casts, which provide long-term protection, splints are temporary and easy to adjust. If necessary, you can make one from everyday items to make an injured person more comfortable until professional help arrives. Let's find out how!

Choices—do one:

- **Practice making splints.** Have Seniors go online and research how to make splints from everyday objects. Gather a variety of common materials—things easily found at home, in a car, or in nature—and set them up at stations around your meeting space. Specify a body part (arm, leg, finger, ankle, etc.) for each station. Divide Seniors into groups, one per station, and have them splint the appropriate body part on a group volunteer. Then have groups present their work.

Materials: *variety of common materials for making splints; computers, tablets, or smartphones*

- **Ask an expert.** Invite an emergency first responder, such as an EMT, doctor, or nurse, to a meeting to show Seniors how to create makeshift splints. Ask in advance if the speaker needs you to have any particular supplies on hand. Have Seniors try the techniques themselves, then ask the speaker to provide feedback.

Materials: *requested supplies, if any*

- **Take a First Aid/CPR/AED course.** Search online to find a local First Aid/CPR/AED course. Make sure the course you choose covers how to make and use splints. Enroll your troop and attend the training.

Materials: none

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

Step 3: Learn the signs of drug overdose and alcohol poisoning • 20–30 minutes

Ask: Do you know the signs of drug overdose and alcohol poisoning? How can you help if they occur?

Share: In high school, some young people experiment with drugs and alcohol. They may even overdose on drugs or consume enough alcohol to poison themselves, putting their lives in danger. You can help by knowing the signs of overuse and learning how to provide care until help arrives.

Choices—do one:

- **Learn about the opioid epidemic.** Have Seniors work together to research the opioid epidemic as well as the use and availability of naloxone in your community. Then, lead a discussion in which Seniors brainstorm ways they can help to prevent more opioid deaths. This may be a difficult topic, so allow Seniors to adjust the experience in any way that works for them.

Materials: *computer, tablet, or smartphone*

- **Watch a presentation.** Invite a speaker from an organization that works to educate people about drunk and impaired driving. Ask them to give a presentation to Seniors. Make sure to leave ample time for Q&A.

Materials: *none*

- **Choose your own project or activity.** Seniors may have personal experiences or life situations that make the topics of drug overdose and alcohol poisoning difficult to navigate. Support each Senior in choosing a project or activity that feels comfortable to them.

Materials: *computers, smartphones, or tablets*

Step 4: Learn how to identify and care for life-threatening bleeding • 20–30 minutes (more if taking a course)

Ask: Did you know that a person can die from severe blood loss in less than five minutes? What can you do if faced with this situation?

Share: Bleeding from minor cuts often stops on its own. But sometimes severe injuries lead to more serious bleeding. If this type of bleeding isn't stopped immediately, a person may die of blood loss before help can arrive. You can take action to halt severe bleeding. In this step, we'll learn how.

Choices—do one:

- **Take a course in person or online.** Search online to find a local STOP THE BLEED® course. Enroll your troop and attend the training.

Materials: *none*

- **Interview a first responder about life-threatening bleeding.** Find a first responder for Seniors to interview. Have Seniors ask about how to recognize life-threatening bleeding, how to treat it, how to get help, and what to do while waiting for help to arrive.

Materials: *none*

- **Create a kit for use in bleeding emergencies.** Have Seniors research the basic supplies needed for emergency bleeding control. Some supplies, such as tourniquets, are specialty items that will need to be ordered online. Have Seniors order the supplies to create one emergency kit each, then assemble the kits when the supplies come in. (Note: This activity spreads across two meetings; plan accordingly.) Instruct Seniors to keep the kits in a car or anywhere else they can access them on the go.

Materials: *computer, smartphone, or tablet; one small box per Senior; emergency supplies ordered by Seniors*

Step 5: Share your knowledge with others • 20–30 minutes

Ask: What have you learned while working to earn this badge? Do you understand the information well enough to explain it to others?

Share: When you can teach things that you have learned, you know you truly understand a concept or skill. Teaching also gives you the chance to inspire others! In this step, we'll share what we've learned about first aid.

Choices—do one:

- **Give a presentation to younger Girl Scouts.** Arrange for Seniors to visit a younger Girl Scout troop meeting. Find a troop that has worked on or plans to work on their First Aid badge, if possible. Have Seniors give first-person accounts of their experiences and choices as they earned their own First Aid badge or badges.

Materials: *none*

- **Talk to other teens.** Have each Senior bring a new friend to a meeting. Have a roundtable discussion in which Seniors tell their guests what they've learned.

Materials: *none*

- **Share with your community.** Help Seniors identify events where they can present what they've learned about first aid to community members. Support Seniors in preparing their remarks in advance.

Materials: *none*

TM ® & © 2024 Girl Scouts of the United States of America. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical methods, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, now known or hereinafter invented, without the prior written permission of Girl Scouts of the United States of America (GSUSA), except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law. For permissions requests, write to GSUSA at the address below or visit the www.girlscouts.org website to access permission request forms.

First published in 2024 by Girl Scouts of the United States of America, 420 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10018-2798, www.girlscouts.org