

## First Aid Saves Lives

*Gain the knowledge to save a life!*

Once an injury or sudden illness occurs, effective first aid can make the difference between a rapid or prolonged recovery, a temporary or permanent disability, and even life or death. In 2017, the Bureau of Labor statistics reported that approximately 2.8 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses, as such, administering first aid to an injured colleague is critical while waiting for the emergency responders to arrive, or seeking professional medical treatment.

Although AEDs and CPR are common first aid methods, there are other medical emergencies that require different first aid techniques. For example, there are first aid methods to respond to choking, bone fractures, dislocations, cuts, minor burns, and poisoning.

When administering first aid, remember to practice universal precautions to avoid contact with bodily fluids known as Blood Borne Pathogens (BBPs), by wearing gloves, goggles, face shields, or CPR barriers. BBPs are pathogenic microorganisms present in human blood that can cause disease in humans. BBPs can be transmitted through contact with infected human blood and other potentially infectious body fluids. These pathogens include, but are not limited to, Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV).



Training and certification is required before administering first aid. In fact, according to OSHA, if employers are not in close proximity to a hospital, employers are required to have personnel trained in first aid and bloodborne pathogens, and ensure adequate first aid supplies are readily available. Although Northwestern's campuses are in close proximity to hospitals, providing first aid training is considered a best practice, especially in a high hazard work environments or if there is a history of work related injuries.

Risk Management offers information on how to obtain AED, BBP, CPR, and first aid training. Below are some tips on how to set yourself up for success in the event of a medical emergency:

- **Preparation is key:** Become familiar with where your department's closest AEDs and first aid kits are located. Even if you aren't trained, being familiar with the location of these items can be helpful when an emergency occurs.
- **Keep safety in mind:** First aid kits must be fully stocked; the last thing you want in an emergency is to find an empty first aid kit. The following are minimum requirements for first aid kits per ANSI (American National Standard Institute):
  - At least 1 absorbent compress (32 sq. in.)
  - At least 16 adhesive bandages (1 x 3 in.)
  - 1 roll of adhesive tape (5 yards)
  - At least 20 packets of antiseptic applications
  - At least 6 applications of burn treatment (0.5g)
  - 2 or more pair of medical exam gloves
  - At least 4 sterile pads (3in x 3in.)
  - 1 triangular bandage (40 in x 40in.)

**For more help:** Follow [Northwestern's procedures](#) for medical emergencies.

## Tips for Success When Talking to Your Team

- **Preparation is Key:** Keep the topic relevant. Work with your team to discuss and locate your department's nearest first aid kit and AED.
- **Stay Positive:** Keep the focus on what can be done to create a safe workplace, instead of focusing on what has gone wrong in the past.
- **Share a Story, Ask for a Story:** Storytelling is a powerful method to convey information. Stories from your employees make the topic even more relatable.

## Safety at Home – Stay strong with a healthy heart

With February being American Heart Month, it is a perfect time to be aware of your surrounding resources and tools for medical emergencies. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), heart disease is the leading cause of death in both men and women with about 630,000 deaths per year in the U.S. To protect you and your family, consider these safety tips:

- Get trained: CPR and first aid classes are offered through the American Red Cross and have training locations all over Chicagoland. Visit [Red Cross](#)' website for more information.
- For heart health and stroke information, visit the [American Heart Association](#)'s website. For questions on your own heart health, don't be afraid to talk to your doctor.
- You should have a first aid kit in rooms at home, such as the kitchen and a garage or basement workshop, and make sure to refill it after items are used.



## For Additional Information

Please contact [Gwen Butler](#), Director of Environmental Health and Safety, at 847.491.4936 with any questions.