



THE UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE

ASHINGDON & ROCHFORD

GROUP LEADERS HANDBOOK

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Starting a new group

First things first:

Anyone interested in having a new interest group should inform the Group Coordinator, or designated Committee member. An announcement can then be made at the monthly meeting, and a notice put in the newsletter and on the website. All those interested will be asked to sign their names on a list. They can then agree to meet at a given place and time.

Getting started

At an informal first meeting, you might like to consider the following

- a. Find out what the members want to do, and what they expect of the group.
- b. What expertise do you have in the proposed group?
- c. How often to meet, at what time of day and for how long?
- d. A suitable place to meet – do you need to book a venue? Payment for outside venues should be made through the U3A treasurer.
- e. If meeting at members' homes, consider a rotation basis. It is our policy to pay .30p towards refreshments if provided.
- f. Do you need to share transport (and transport costs) to attend meetings?
- g. Who might like to lead the group? It doesn't have to be just one person.
- h. Publicising meetings – preferably by email although a telephone tree may be useful. Always be mindful of Data Protection and seek permission to use contact details.
- i. Do you need any equipment? If so, who will provide it – and remember to bring it?
- j. Make sure that members of your group have your contact details so that they can advise you of non-attendance.

When the group is up and running:

- a. Make sure you tell other U3A members what your group is doing. This may encourage others to join.
- b. Pool ideas and suggestions within your group, and make a note of them.
- c. Write a few lines for the Newsletter and website.
- d. Take photos if you can, and let others see them.
- e. Keep a register of members who attend each meeting (important for Insurance purposes) and ensure that you have their ICE details.
- f. Consider the use of a logbook (or scrapbook) as a means of recording what you do. This would be useful for future reference.
- g. If the group is very popular, and expands quickly, think about whether you need to form two groups.

More detailed information can be found on the U3A Advice Sheet 14 for Group Leaders

ADVICE SHEET 14 FOR GROUP LEADERS/CO-ORDINATORS/FACILITATORS

The intention of this advice sheet is to bring together on one sheet of paper all the advice relevant to group leaders/co-ordinators/facilitators which is included in various publications produced by the Trust. It should not in any way contradict or undermine any guidelines issued by your committee.

In this document there is an assumption that you will have somebody in the role of Groups' Co-ordinator to consult. In the absence of such a person, please speak to the Secretary.

Groups held in outside accommodation

- If you are responsible for selecting a suitable venue make sure you consult the risk assessment checklist and Advice Sheet 1 – Accessibility for Disabled Members.
- Don't sign any rental agreement yourself – pass it to your groups' co-ordinator for the committee to deal with.
- When you arrive use the venue/day of use checklist to reassure yourself that everything is in place and as it should be. If you have any safety concerns then **do not continue** if they cannot be resolved to your satisfaction.
- If your activity takes place in a workshop/outbuilding consult the risk assessment checklist for a workshop activity.

Your members

- Ask your members to provide you with contact details i.e. telephone numbers/email addresses.
- Ensure everybody attending is a member and always check when any new faces arrive.
- If you are asked whether a non-member can attend consult your committee first.
- If you have a situation where a non-member appears to see whether U3A is for them, advise the committee afterwards and if a member brings a visitor establish whether permission has been given by the committee. If not explain that in future for insurance reasons prior permission is essential.
- If a member stops coming try to find out why.

Problems

- In the case of an accident complete an accident form or send a detailed report to the committee, including details of witnesses.
- If emergency first aid is required follow the recommendations on advice sheet 2 and if you have a smart phone it may be useful to download a free first aid app from the Red Cross.
- Remember personal accident insurance cover is **not** provided by The Third Age Trust.
- If damage is caused to property by a member of the group, take full details, as it may in future be the subject of an insurance claim.
- Should you have a difficult member whose behaviour is regularly impacting on other members of the group go to your groups' co-ordinator for help.
- If you have a serious problem in a session, it is quite acceptable to ask a member to leave but contact your groups' co-ordinator as soon as possible after the end of the session.
- If you have a member who is not able to cope independently, inform your groups' co-ordinator.

Self-financing groups

- Never open a bank account.
- Never put members' money into your personal account.
- Give receipts and avoid cash where possible.

ADVICE SHEET 14 FOR GROUP LEADERS/CO-ORDINATORS/FACILITATORS

- If you do hold cash, ensure you do not exceed any limit laid down by your U3A and follow any guidelines for paying in cash.
- Get receipts where possible when you hand money over.
- If you are using your own credit card to pay for group events consult your treasurer for advice.
- Report as regularly to your treasurer as you are required to do so.

Group organisation

- Make sure you give sufficient information for group members to make an informed choice as to whether they wish to participate and then let them decide. This is particularly important if you are running a physical activity.
- Remind members if you are doing a physically active subject that they undertake it at their own risk.
- If you are leading walks, have a look at the walk leader checklist.
- If appropriate to your activity have a copy of Advice Sheet 10 on Licences which covers photocopying, recorded music, DVDs/videos and performance.
- If you provide written material and use the U3A logo make sure it is correctly displayed. See Advice Sheet 9.
- Delegate where you can and spread the load.
- Use the resources available from the Third Age Trust
 - The Resource Centre – 020 8315 0199/resource.centre@u3a.org.uk.
 - Sources – an educational journal – which is included with the direct mailing of Third Age Matters and is in the members' area of the website under 'document downloads' with a link via 'publications'.
 - Subject Advisers – see website for details – www.u3a.org.uk.

Other publications you should have in your possession

- Information for Treasurers.
- Insurance.
- Interest groups.
- Time to learn.

If you need any of the above contact the National Office – 020 8466 6139/national.office@u3a.org.uk

Finally, never forget that

Whatever happens you are fully protected by the liability insurance policy provided by the Third Age Trust.

You are the life blood Group of your U3A - without you there wouldn't be one!

So on behalf of the U3A movement – thank you.

Photocopying

Under UK copyright law you are only allowed to copy an insubstantial amount for personal use for the purposes of private study or non-commercial research, but the law does not define insubstantial. There is no magic figure or percentage applied as each case would be viewed on the basis of the perceived importance of the extract rather than simply the quantity.

A Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) licence allows multiple photocopies from books, journals and magazines. Extracts can be up to 5%, one chapter or one article, whichever is the greater.

The licence costs £60 and runs until 31st July each year, regardless of when you actually take it out.

If you want to purchase a licence please send a cheque for £60 made payable to The Third Age Trust.

NB. It does **not** allow multiple copies of maps, charts, newspapers or printed sheet music including the words

Licences for copying maps and newspapers can be purchased from the following organisations if you feel you need them:-

- Ordnance Survey – 08456 050505 www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk
- Newspaper Licensing Agency - 01892 525273 www.nla.co.uk

There is no blanket licence available for multiple copying of sheet music; this is always illegal unless it is no longer in copyright. If you would like help and advice on obtaining copyright clearance you can look at Frequently Asked Questions on The Music Publishers' Association website www.mpaonline.org.uk or contact them on 0207 580 0126.

There is also some free sheet music available on the internet at www.cpd.org.uk and this will give you links to other useful sites.

Digital Images

There is a common misconception that anything on the internet is in the public domain and therefore free to use. A work only falls into the public domain once copyright expires. It may be publicly accessible but it is not necessarily freely available.

Recorded Music

The PPL licence supplied by The Trust gives U3As permission to play recorded music in public.

DVDs/Videos

The Third Age Trust has no blanket licence arrangement with film copyright holders or organisations.

Interest groups are usually covered by an exemption in the Copyright Law which allows the use of videos or DVDs for educational purposes. You can find details in Fact Sheet P -01: UK Copyright Law dated 27th November 2009, which you can download from the website of the UK Copyright Service (www.copyrightservice.co.uk). It lists under acts that are allowed (under the Fair Dealing Exemption) i.e. performance, copies or lending for educational purposes.

This exemption does not allow the viewing of films for entertainment.

Two commercial companies offer licences for showings for entertainment:-

- MPLC 01323 649647 www.themplc.co.uk
- PVSL 0207 9845957 www.filmbank.co.uk

Each company licenses films from different Hollywood studios and independents so some U3As may wish to purchase both.

Most U3As will probably not need a commercial licence but some decide to take it as it will allow them to show films if they want to and some have regular showings of recent cinema releases.

Performance - PRS Licence

This covers the use of the actual lyrics and composed music in any public performance of music.

It is the sole responsibility of the proprietor/manager of the premises you are using to have a licence arranged.

Further information can be obtained from the UK Copyright Service – www.copyrightservice.co.uk

Many U3As arrange excellent “social” events for their members ranging from outings to Christmas lunches, as well as organising travel either in the UK or Europe which either be for a specific study group or for all members. The purpose of this advice sheet is to recommend best practice, to make you aware when you are covered by U3A insurance and to ensure that neither participating members nor the organisers are putting themselves at risk.

There are three types of activities that are considered in this advice sheet:

1. Day events; travel only, open to all members of the U3A.
2. Study Group overnight trips; including both travel and accommodation.
3. Holidays; open to all members of the U3A.

Organiser

Such activities, once the committee has given its approval, are normally put together by an organiser or a small committee. The organiser is responsible for making the bookings, arranging the transport and accommodation or in the case of a holiday, arranging the travel package with the travel agent/company. However, all the financial arrangements must be overseen by the main committee of the U3A, usually the Treasurer. In addition all contracts must be signed by a Trustee on behalf of and in the name of the U3A. When organising day events or overnight trips, care should be taken in making any prepayments, as there is no insurance provided which will protect you should the supplier go out of business.

Social Events

The organiser will arrange an event at a suitable date with the venue and then, in liaison with the Treasurer, arrange with the venue and transport operator the contract, deposit and method of payment. The organiser and Treasurer will then agree a “sales” price usually including a small mark-up as a contingency. The prospective attendees will usually contact the organiser direct to make a booking and send a cheque but in some cases it may go directly to the Treasurer. All cheques should be made out to the U3A and to the U3A social account in particular if one exists. The organiser must never collect cash, cheques in his/her name or pay for a venue or coach by means of a personal debit/credit card or cheque. Ignoring this will mean that it becomes a personal rather than a business transaction and it could have insurance implications and place the organiser at financial risk. In order to ensure that all monies are handled correctly, all payments must be made with the full involvement of the committee, with cheques being signed by two trustees.

Study Group Trips

The organiser in this case will be the group organiser/leader but the process is similar to that detailed above for Social Events, except that accommodation is required and is included in the price. By arranging such trips, the organiser could be considered under the EU Group Package Travel Regulations to be the tour operator and therefore liable for any damages or accidents that might occur. So in order to safeguard the organiser, the Trust has arranged Tour Operator Liability insurance which will provide protection should anything untoward happen.

NB. All monies for study group travel should pass through the main U3A account.

Holidays

As far as U3A holidays are concerned, the only safe way to organise them is through a travel agency/company so that you are fully covered by their liability insurance. In addition, it is recommended that all payments be made on an individual basis, directly to the company and not to the U3A. In this way a contract is clearly established between an individual and the company rather than with the U3A as an entity, which is a much safer way to do it. There is,

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SOCIAL EVENTS AND TRAVEL

however, no reason why the organiser should not collect cheques and then either send them in one batch or deliver them.

If you do organise a holiday yourselves, you will have no money insurance and in the event of a serious incident on holiday involving a U3A member or members, you would have no insurance in place to protect you and the organiser(s) could be deemed personally liable and in serious trouble.

Insurance

As long as the basic procedures outlined above are followed, then the liability insurance we provide will cover your day events and your study group overnight trips in the UK and Europe, both with respect to third party liability, your group organiser and member to member cover. If you wish to extend an invitation to members of other U3As that is fine.

It is also acceptable to have a non-member attend a day event with committee permission, providing it is not a regular occurrence for that person to do so.

It must be clearly understood, however, that it does not include personal accident/injury or travel insurance, both of which are the personal responsibility of each U3A member to take out.

Other Matters

1. Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Income and expenditure associated with social events does not have to be included in the official annual return. Their definition of social is wide ranging, but it is safe to define it as any event open to all members and not specifically part of an interest group activity, for which members pay to participate. Thus both social events and holidays as listed above would qualify as social. Whilst the Charity Commission does not need the information on social events, your members are entitled to have a full report, therefore it is recommended that the income less expenditure is shown in the accounts as nett income. Note that whilst an individual event might make a small loss the U3A cannot support a subsidy on an annual basis so this item should always be positive.

NB. If you are a registered charity in Scotland you have to report all U3A accounts.

2. Free Trips.

It is a recognised practice that Tour Operators offer a free trip for, say every 20 members booked but it is up to the committee how these freebies are dealt with, not the group organiser. It is strongly recommended that you adopt a policy of sharing them all out by applying a discount to all travellers whilst retaining the discretion to reflect service from the organiser which is above and beyond what you would normally expect. If, however, the organiser is a trustee, a free place should not be offered as trustees must not receive any personal benefit whilst in the role. In view of the above, it is incumbent on all U3A committees to ensure that any travel operations are run in a properly regulated manner.

3. Cancellations.

Usually if a potential attendee cancels with sufficient time, the organiser can recover some or all of the cost from the venue but not the share of the transport. The main committee should decide what its policy is in this matter and issue guidelines as it is not reasonable for the organiser to have to handle this situation without guidance.

4. Use of Debit/ Credit Cards

It is bad practice to use a personal credit or debit card. As more and more venues will only accept payment by card it will become essential for U3A to arrange a card on their account. All major clearing banks have now agreed to offer debit cards to charities, although it may take a bit of time with some of them. The suggested conditions for their use are contained in the booklet 'Information for Treasurers'.

ADVICE SHEET 5

DATA PROTECTION

Aims of the Data Protection Act

The Data Protection Act obliges everybody to process personal data in accordance with the law. Its aim is to balance the rights of individuals with regard to how their information is processed with the legitimate need of organisations to use information.

U3As as not-for-profit organisations are exempt from registration provided that:-

1. The processing of personal data is only for the following purposes
 - Establishing or maintaining membership
 - Providing or administering activities for individuals who are members.
2. The persons about whom the data is held are current or prospective members.
3. The type of data held is only that necessary to undertake the purposes above i.e. names, addresses, identifiers.

Obligations under the Act

Even though U3As do not need to register, they must still comply with the other requirements of the Act and remain subject to penalties if offences occur. Most importantly the processing should be in compliance with the Eight Data Protection Principles. These determine how personal data should be processed in order to comply with the Act and give rights to individuals regarding this processing.

The Eight Data Protection Principles

1. Personal data shall be processed fairly and lawfully.
2. Personal data shall be obtained for one or more specified and lawful purposes and shall not be further processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose or those purposes.
3. Personal data shall be adequate, relevant and not excessive in relation to the purpose or purposes for which they are processed.
4. Personal data shall be accurate and where necessary kept up to date.
5. Personal data processed for any purpose or purposes shall not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose or those purposes.
6. Personal data shall be processed in accordance with the rights of data subjects under this Act.
7. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction or damage to personal data.
8. Personal data shall not be transferred to a country or territory outside the European Economic Area, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

Things to consider

1. Do the people whose information is held know what it is going to be used for?
The best way is to put a statement on your membership form that the supplied data will be held and maintained on a computer for the purposes of correspondence/contact. If you haven't done this in the past, you would be advised to mention it in your newsletter.
2. Is it accurate and up to date?
You must ensure that you make changes quickly to all copies.
3. Is it deleted and destroyed if the person leaves?
4. Is it held on a strict need to know basis?
Ensure that you limit the number of committee members holding the full database to the absolute minimum. If there are other members of the committee who need contact details, just supply them with email addresses and telephone numbers. If group leaders/convenors require contact information, the best way is for them to request it from their group members.
5. Is it held securely?
Password protect the database and avoid issuing hard copies unless you have no choice.

Suggested formula for calculating petrol costs

Your group may decide to take a trip using one or more members vehicles. In this case you may wish to consider the following formula for working out fair travel costs for each member. Using this formula will mean that each driver will receive the same amount based on the AAs 'per mile' motoring cost and not just petrol/diesel money.

This basic amount per mile may change from time to time but currently the AA have calculated the cost based on 129p per litre of petrol and we have used the rate for a vehicle costing between £13,000 and £18,000. Currently 21p per mile.

Work out the amount of miles travelled, say 50 miles \times 21p = £10.50 per vehicle. Say 2 cars = £21 in all. Divide this sum by the number of travellers, say 7 = £3 cost for each person. Each driver will then receive the same sum irrespective of how many passengers carried. This is fair as each driver incurs the same cost.

January 2016

VENUE RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

U3A Name:					
Location:					
Date:					
U3A Interest Group					
Description of Activity:					
HAZARD		Yes	No	N/A	COMMENTS
1	Is the access suitable for the group attending the activity?				
2	Is wheelchair access adequate?				
3	Is the area free from obstructions & trip hazards?				
4	Is adequate means of escape in an emergency provided?				
5	Are there appropriate direction signs to aid escape?				
6	Is there a Fire Alarm?				
7	Is there Emergency Lighting?				
8	Is there designated assembly point? Where is it?				
9	Is there an emergency procedure for the building? Do you have a copy?				
10	Is seating always laid out?				
	Is it a U3A responsibility to before and after the activity to lay out seating				
11	Is food being provided / prepared?				
	Is the kitchen adequate and hygienic?				
	Are food safe cleaning materials available?				
	Visual safety check on Kettles etc				
12	Are the Toilets facilities adequate & accessible?				
13	Is equipment being brought to the venue?				
	Has it been safety checked?				
14	Is there a First Aid box or is the U3A to provide				
15	Other (define)				
16	Other (define)				
Additional information:					

Signature

Position

Date

VENUE CHECKLIST – DAY OF USE

U3A Name:	
U3A Interest Group:	
Location:	
Date:	
Description of Activity:	

CHECK		Yes (✓)
1	Emergency Exits unobstructed	
2	Emergency Exits unlocked	
3	Fire Extinguishers in place	
4	Toilet facilities open, clean, paper available etc	
5	Walkways free from trip hazards	
6	Kitchen facilities accessible & clean	
7	Kettle leads in good condition, free from wear and fraying, plug securely attached	
8	Refreshment materials available	
9	First Aid equipment accessible	
10	Safety Briefing given a. Emergency exits b. Assembly point c. What to do if fire discovered d. What to do if the alarm sounds e. Accident / injury reporting f. Toilet and washing facility location	
11	Other(specify)	
12	Other(specify)	

NOTES

Signature

Position

Date

First Aid

This advice sheet aims to summarise basic information on providing first aid to members and on the symptoms of some common medical problems, as well as covering legal issues and where to obtain portable first aid guides for members.

WHAT TO DO¹

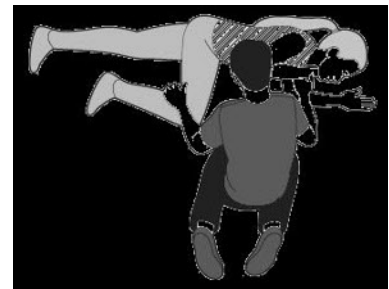
When someone is choking

1. COUGH IT OUT – Encourage them to cough.
2. SLAP IT OUT – Give them five sharp back blows between their shoulder blades with the heel of your hand.
3. SQUEEZE IT OUT – Stand behind them, put your arms around the upper part of the abdomen, clench your fist and put it between the navel and the bottom of their breastbone, grasp your fist firmly with the other hand, pull upwards up to five times.

If the person is still choking, repeat the backslaps and abdominal thrusts up to three times, then call 999 or 112 and continue the sequence until help arrives.

When someone is bleeding severely

1. PRESS IT – Apply direct pressure over the wound using a dressing. Use gloves where possible and if no dressing is available, ask the person to apply pressure themselves.
2. RAISE IT – Help them to lie down and where possible raise the injured limb to reduce blood loss.
3. CALL 999 OR 112.



When someone is unconscious

1. OPEN AIRWAY – Check the airway is open and clear.
2. TILT HEAD – Lift their chin to ensure the airway stays open.
3. CHECK BREATHING – Look, listen and feel for signs that they are still breathing.

Only if spinal injury is **not** suspected, put them into the recovery position (see image to the right). **If there is any doubt, do not move the casualty: await professional help.**

When someone has stopped breathing

If they are unconscious, follow steps 1-3 above, then:

1. CALL 999 OR 112 – Ask for an ambulance.
2. DEFIBRILLATOR – Ask for an Automated External Defibrillator if one is available*.
3. PUMP – Place one hand on the centre of their chest. Place the heel of your other hand on top of the first and interlock your fingers, keeping your fingers off their ribs. Lean directly over their chest and press down vertically about 5-6cm (2-2 ½ inches). Give 30 compressions at a rate of 100-120 per minute.
4. BREATHE – If you are able to, tilt their head, pinch their nose, take a breath, seal your lips over their mouth and breathe out for approximately 1 second, until their chest rises. When it has fallen, repeat to give a second rescue breath then repeat 30 compressions in a continuous cycle, until the person shows signs of regaining consciousness such as coughing, opening his eyes, speaking or moving purposefully.

*USING A DEFIBRILLATOR: Defibrillators are easy to use as you just have to follow the spoken instructions. Although they look different they all work in the same way and you do not need training to use them. Your first priority should be to call an ambulance and perform CPR – do not interrupt this to go and find one but do send someone to get one when you are able.

OTHER SITUATIONS²

Burns

COOL THE AFFECTED AREA – cool the burn under running water for at least 10 minutes, then loosely cover it with clingfilm or a clean plastic bag and call 999 or 112.

Head injury

APPLY SOMETHING COLD – apply a cold compress to the injury (e.g. frozen vegetables wrapped in a tea towel). If they become drowsy or vomit, call 999 or 112.

Nosebleed

PINCH THE NOSE – Ask them to pinch the soft part of their nose and to lean forward. Continue for 10 minutes. Seek medical advice if the bleeding continues for more than half an hour.

Wounds

CLEAN AND COVER – Wash your own hands, clean the cut if dirty, pat dry, cover with a sterile dressing and raise above the heart if possible.

If there is a small object embedded, try to clean it out. If the object is larger, leave it in place, apply pressure on either side of the object, build up padding around the object until the padding is higher than the object, then bandage over the object without pressing on it, arrange for the casualty to go to hospital.

Sprain

R.I.C.E. Rest, Ice, Compress, Elevate.

If there is no improvement, seek medical advice.

Broken bone

IMMOBILISE THE AFFECTED PART – ask them to support the injury with their hand or use a cushion or items of clothing to prevent unnecessary movement and call 999 or 112.

RECOGNISING SIGNS

This section aims to provide information on how to recognise the signs that different types of incidents are happening and what action to take in each case.

Asthma attack³

SIGNS: symptoms (such as cough, breathlessness, wheeze or tight chest) are getting worse; the inhaler isn't helping; the person is breathless or finding it difficult to speak, eat or sleep.

ACTION: help the person to sit in a comfortable position and to take their medication. If the attack becomes severe, call 999 or 112.

Mild allergic reaction⁴

SIGNS: tingling; itching or burning sensations; nasty taste in the mouth; rash; swelling; feeling hot or having chills; feeling anxious; being flushed; abdominal pain; nausea; mild wheeziness.

ACTION: help them to take their medication (such as antihistamine or a reliever inhaler) if they have some and monitor the situation.

Severe allergic reaction⁵ (known as anaphylaxis)

SIGNS: severe swelling of the tongue or throat associated with difficulty breathing; difficulty talking or a hoarse voice; severe wheeze; fainting and dizziness; looking pale, blue or clammy; being disorientated or unresponsive; collapse.

ACTION: phone 999 and state that someone is having a severe allergic reaction. Help them to find a comfortable position (lying down may help dizziness and sitting up may help with breathlessness). The treatment is an

² The information in this section is taken from the Red Cross www.redcross.org.uk/everydayfirstaid

³ <http://www.asthma.org.uk/advice-asthma-attacks>

⁴ <http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/patient-guide/leaflets/files%5C121210reactions.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/patient-guide/leaflets/files%5C121210reactions.pdf>

injection of adrenaline. If someone has an EpiPen (a pre-filled syringe with a concealed, spring-activated needle) help them to inject themselves then ask them to lie down and monitor the situation. If there is no improvement after 10 minutes, another dose of EpiPen can be given. Note the times of both doses.

Fainting⁶

SIGNS: Fainting is a sudden, temporary loss of consciousness that usually results in a fall. In most cases, when a person faints, they'll regain consciousness within a minute or two. However, less common types of fainting can be medical emergencies.

ACTION: If someone feels faint, encourage them to lie down, with their legs higher than their head if possible or sit with their head between their knees. If they faint and do not regain consciousness within one or two minutes, put them in the recovery position (see above) and call 999 or 112.

Seizure⁷

SIGNS: Seizures can take on many different forms and symptoms may include difficulty talking; drooling; repeated eye movements; lack of movement or muscle tone; tremors, twitching or jerking movements; repeated non-purposeful movements (called automatisms) such as, lipsmacking or chewing movements, repeated movements of hands, dressing or undressing, walking or running; convulsion; losing control of urine or stool unexpectedly; sweating; difficulty breathing; heart racing.

ACTION: Try to prevent injury. Do not restrain them but try to cushion their head. After the seizure, help them to rest on their side with their head tilted back.

Shock

SIGNS: Shock is a life threatening condition that occurs when the vital organs, such as the brain and heart, are deprived of oxygen due to a problem affecting the circulatory system. Symptoms include paleness; cold, clammy skin; fast, shallow breathing; rapid, weak pulse; yawning; sighing; in extreme cases, unconsciousness.

ACTION: Treat the cause of shock; lay the casualty down with their head low and their legs raised and supported. Dial 999 or 112, if you have not already done so. Then make the person comfortable by loosening any tight clothing; covering them with a coat or blanket; comforting and reassuring them. Also, check breathing and pulse frequently.

Stroke

SIGNS: The face may have dropped on one side and the person may not be able to move their facial muscles; they may not be able to lift their arms because of weakness or numbness; their speech may be slurred or garbled.

ACTION: Carry out the F.A.S.T. test to determine whether the person is displaying the symptoms above:

Face: is there weakness on one side?

Arms: can they raise both?

Speech: is it easily understood?

Time: to call the emergency services.

Diabetes⁸

SIGNS: Diabetes is managed by balancing medication, food and activity. When these fall out of balance hypoglycaemia (often referred to as a hypo) can occur. Common symptoms of a hypo are: feeling shaky, sweating, hunger, tiredness, blurred vision, lack of concentration, headaches, feeling tearful or moody, going pale.

ACTION: For a hypo, help the person to access fast acting carbohydrates (sugary drinks, sweets, fruit juices or glucose gels).

Heart attack

SIGNS: Symptoms can include: chest pain, which can travel to the arms (usually the left) and also the jaw, neck, back and abdomen; feeling lightheaded or dizzy; sweating; shortness of breath; nausea or vomiting; an overwhelming sense of anxiety (similar to having a panic attack); coughing or wheezing.

⁶ <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Fainting/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.epilepsy.com/learn/epilepsy-101/what-happens-during-seizure>

⁸ <http://www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/Complications/Hypos-Hypers/>

ACTION: Call an ambulance, make sure they are in a comfortable position and give them constant reassurance while waiting for the emergency services to arrive.

LEGAL ISSUES

Members are sometimes concerned about the legal implications of getting involved with performing first aid. The British Red Cross advises that 'where someone is acting in good faith to help save someone's life there is very little risk of them being sued for doing that'. In addition, the Social Action, Responsibility and Heroism Bill has been designed to address those concerns. It ensures that if something goes wrong when people are acting for the benefit of society or intervening to help someone in an emergency, the courts will take into account the context of their actions in the event they are sued.⁹

PORTABLE GUIDES

St John's Ambulance produces a pocket paper guide to essential first aid. You can order your free copy on their website:

<https://www.sja.org.uk/sja/support-us/the-difference/get-a-free-first-aid-guide.aspx>

The Red Cross and St John's Ambulance provide apps for mobile phones with first aid tips:

<http://www.redcross.org.uk/en/What-we-do/First-aid/Mobile-app>

<http://www.sja.org.uk/sja/support-us/the-difference/helpless/mobile-phone-app.aspx>

The British Heart Foundation offers an app to guide you through performing CPR:

<https://www.bhf.org.uk/heart-health/nation-of-lifesavers/hands-only-cpr/cpr-app>