

Stay safe: dealing with shock

By safely disposing of your liquid waste, you are helping to protect the natural environment. But it's important to protect yourself and others too.

Each year thousands of people die or are seriously injured through accidents. A lot of these deaths could have been prevented if first aid was given before the emergency services arrived.

What should you do if someone is injured?

- First, check you and the injured person are not in any danger. If you are, make it safe
- Call 999 or 112 for medical help or an ambulance. The operator will be able to talk you through basic life-saving instructions
- Provide the injured person with first aid.

The following provides useful instructions on how to deal with shock:

Anaphylactic shock

Anaphylactic shock is a severe allergic reaction that can happen within seconds or minutes of the person coming into contact with something they are allergic to e.g. following an insect sting or after eating certain foods.

During anaphylactic shock the person may find it extremely difficult to breathe, as their airway may become blocked as a result of their tongue or throat swelling up. If this is happening call 999 or 112 immediately!



- Check if the person is carrying any medication. Some people with severe allergies carry an adrenaline self-injector, which is a type of pre-loaded syringe
- You can either help the person administer their medication or, if you're trained, give it to them yourself
- After they have received the injection continue to look after them and make sure they can breathe as best they can until medical help arrives
- If they're conscious, sitting upright is sometimes the best position for them.

Anyone who has had an adrenaline injection must be seen and checked by a healthcare professional as soon as possible after the injection.

Electric shock

If someone has suffered from an electric shock, the first thing you should do is ensure the power source is switched off before approaching the injured person.

Electricity can 'jump' or 'arc' beyond the injured party - high voltage electricity can jump up to distances of 18 metres or more. You should therefore maintain a safe distance at all times and not approach the injured party until you are sure the power supply has been isolated.

Once the power supply has been switched off dial 999 or 112 for an ambulance

Shock

When people suffer a serious injury or illness, it's important to look out for signs of shock.

Shock is a life-threatening condition that occurs when the circulatory system fails to provide enough oxygenated blood to the body and deprives the vital organs of oxygen.

This is usually the result of severe blood loss, but it can also occur after severe burns, severe vomiting, a heart attack, a bacterial infection or a severe allergic reaction.

If someone is showing the signs of shock, seek medical help immediately!

What are the signs of shock?

- Pale, cold or clammy looking skin
- Sweating
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Weakness and dizziness
- Feeling sick or being sick
- Feeling thirsty or tired

What should you do?

- Call 999 as soon as possible and ask for an ambulance
- Treat their injuries
- Lie the person down if their injuries allow you to. If possible, raise and support their legs
- Keep them warm
- Don't give them anything to eat or drink
- Provide reassurance
- If they stop breathing, start CPR and call 999.