Emergencies
New Vocabulary

- 9-1-1
- 9-1-1 Operator
- Accident
- Ambulance
- CPR
- Doctor
- Emergency
- EMT
- Fire
- Firefighter
- Injury/injured
- Hurt
- Paramedic
- Pesticide
- Acute
- Chronic
- Police Officer
- Robbery
- Weapon

WHAT is an emergency?
An emergency is an unexpected and sudden event that must be dealt with quickly. Fires, car accidents, and heart attacks are examples of emergencies. For some emergencies, you will need to call the 911 operator for help. The 911 operator can send a fire truck, an ambulance, or the police to help you. It is important to stay calm and know what to do in the case of an emergency.

WHEN should you call 911?

_When you need a fire truck, an ambulance, or the police to come right away you should call 9-1-1._

Here are some examples of times that you should call 9-1-1.

- When a crime is in progress (for example, you see a person seen breaking into your home or car, or when there is a fight with or without weapons).
- When you smell smoke or see fire.
- You see a car accident where someone is hurt.
- During a heart attack, if someone is unconscious or bleeding a lot, or other serious medical emergency.
- Any situation requiring the immediate response of a fire truck, ambulance, or police.
- When life and/or property are in immediate danger.

Otherwise, call your local police non-emergency desk, city information or complaints department, hospital, or doctor’s office. Make a list of these numbers and keep them near your telephone. When you call, you may be asked for this information:
• The location of the emergency
• Your name, address and telephone number you are calling from
• What happened.

If you can’t think of anything else, remember to say, "I need help." This tells the 9-1-1 operator right away it’s not a prank call or a mistake.

**Example Conversation during a 9-1-1 call**

OPERATOR: "Nine-one-one operator. What is your emergency?"

CALLER: I have a medical emergency. My mother is having a heart attack.

OPERATOR: Where is your mother?

CALLER: She is at my home at 110 Bayview Lane in Kirkland. Please send an ambulance!

OPERATOR: What is your name?

CALLER: I am Marta Oliveras.

OPERATOR: What is your mother's name?

CALLER: Norma Oliveras.

OPERATOR: Don't hang up! Help is on the way!

*The questions above are used often, in one variation or another. Some of the following questions might be asked, depending on the emergency.*

"Are you OK? Were you hurt?"
"How old are you?"
"Is the person still around?"
"What did the person look like?"
“How many cars involved?” (for a car accident)

When you call 9-1-1 try to be calm. Be prepared to answer questions in a calm clear way. It may help if you take a couple of deep breaths before you call. The important thing is to be calm so the operator can get you the help you need.

They might want to ask you a lot of questions! Make sure you listen carefully. Every question they ask has an important reason. They want to get the right kind of help to you as quickly as possible. Be prepared to follow any instructions the operator gives you.

Emergency or not? Do you call 9-1-1? Write yes or no!

- Your child has a cold and you can’t get in to the clinic. _____
- You see a stranger lurking around your house. _____
- You need directions. ____
- Your friend falls out of a tree and is hurt badly. _____
- You get sunburned. _____
- Your neighbor’s house is on fire. ____
- You see a car bump into a dog. ___

What if I’m not sure?

If you’re not sure, call 9-1-1 and the trained operator will help you. It is better to be safe and let the 9-1-1 operator determine if you need help. Always err on the side of caution. When in doubt, call.

What if I call 9-1-1 by mistake?

If you call by mistake, do not hang up, just stay on the phone and tell the operator that everything is OK. If you hang up, they may send a police officer or fire truck to your location to see if there is a problem.
Practice: Write Your Answers

OPERATOR: "Nine-one-one operator. What is your emergency?"
CALLER/YOU: Start with "I need help" and go on to describe the problem (car accident, fire, poison, snake bite, etc.)

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

OPERATOR: "Are you OK? Were you hurt?"
CALLER/YOU: yes (describe any injuries)/no

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

OPERATOR: "Where are you?"
CALLER/YOU: Give the street address. If you don’t know it, give a description such as names of nearby schools, businesses, streets, stores, etc., to help the 9-1-1 operator know where you are.

House Number: _______________
Street: _______________________
City: _________________________
Description of what is nearby:

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

OPERATOR: "What is your name?"
CALLER/YOU: Give first and last name

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

OPERATOR: What is the phone number you are calling from?
CALLER/YOU: Give phone number. Tell the operator if it is a pay phone, cell phone, or home phone.

_______________________________________________________________________________________________

OPERATOR: "Don't hang up. Help is on the way."
Pesticide Poisoning, It’s an emergency!

What are pesticides?

When people talk about using chemicals on a farm, they often use the word “pesticides.” A pesticide is used to kill or control weeds, bugs, mice, and rats, and bacteria or mold on vegetables.

Pesticide Poisoning or Not?

The symptoms of pesticide poisoning are a lot like those of other types of poisoning and of other diseases like heat exhaustion, food poisoning, or asthma. Just because a person becomes sick after using or being around pesticides doesn’t always mean he is poisoned.

You could get the symptoms after being around a small amount of the pesticide over and over again for a long time or if you’re suddenly exposed to a lot of it all at once. If you do have symptoms of being poisoned, call your doctor and tell him what pesticide you used that might have made you sick.

Kinds of Poisoning

Acute poisoning is the severe poisoning which occurs after exposure to a single dose of pesticide. You could get sick very quickly or the symptoms might not show up right away.

Chronic poisoning is the poisoning which occurs as a result of repeated, small, non-lethal doses over a long period of time. Many symptoms may appear, such as feeling more nervous, you can’t move as fast, you feel grouchier, or you just generally don’t feel as good as you used to.

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1 National Institute of Environmental Health Science
Tell Your Doctor You Work with Pesticides

Many doctors aren’t aware of the symptoms and treatment of pesticide poisoning because it isn’t always common. Pesticide poisoning symptoms can also be confused with other illnesses.

All pesticide poisoning symptoms are not the same. You should tell your doctor which chemicals you use or have been exposed to. Then he or she will know better how to help.

Sample Conversation:

Doctor: How are you feeling?

Patient: My stomach is hurting?

Doctor: When did it start hurting?

Patient: Yesterday at work. I was spraying some chemicals and I wonder if that had anything to do with how I feel.

Doctor: What kind of chemicals were you using?

It’s important to know the early signs of poisoning. If someone has been poisoned you need to get the person away from the chemical quickly. Remove clothing with the pesticide on it and wash off any chemical which has soaked through. You may save a life.

Mild Poisoning or Early Symptoms of Severe Poisoning: You could have a headache, feel tired or weak. You might get dizzy or feel nervous. You could sweat a lot, feel sick to your stomach, and/or not want to eat. You could get diarrhea, lose weight, and/or feel very thirsty. Your joints might hurt and your skin, eyes, or nose and throat could feel itchy or sore.

Moderate Poisoning or Early Symptoms of Severe Poisoning: You could feel sick to your stomach, have diarrhea, or make too much saliva. Your stomach might hurt and you could sweat a lot and shake. You might feel weak and it could be hard to think clearly. Your eyesight could get blurry and it could be very hard to breathe. You might cough and your heart could speed up. Your skin could turn red or yellow.
**Severe Poisoning:** This is an emergency! You might get a fever, feel very thirsty, breathe very fast, and/or vomit. Your muscles might twitch, your pupils might shrink, and your body might shake. You might not be able to breathe and you could go unconscious.

**If you are in doubt whether or not poisoning has occurred, let your doctor decide!**

**Let’s Review! Write down your answers!**

1. Have you ever used a pesticide?
   ____________________________________________________________

2. Do you know what ones you’ve used?
   ____________________________________________________________

3. Were you trained how to use them safely?
   ____________________________________________________________

4. Have you ever felt any symptoms of pesticide poisoning? If yes, what were they?
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2 Cornell University Cooperative Pesticide Safety Education Program