



There are two things to do about all emergencies. The first is to prevent them from happening whenever possible. The second is to know how to deal with them swiftly and effectively when they do happen.

— *Cadette Girl Scout Handbook, 1963*

Cadette

First Aid

As you get older, you'll find yourself in charge more and more. That means you need to know what to do if people around you get sick or hurt! Find out how to deal with minor injuries and illnesses and how to tell when the problem is more serious in this badge.

Steps

1. Understand how to care for younger children
2. Know how to use everything in a first aid kit
3. Find out how to prevent serious outdoor injuries
4. Know the signs of shock and know how to treat it
5. Learn to prevent and treat injuries due to weather

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know how to take care of people in an emergency, including younger children in my care.

Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step. Inspired? Do more!

STEP

1 Understand how to care for younger children

Imagine you're helping out at Girl Scout camp. What should you do if a younger girl is knocked unconscious or twists her ankle? Or what if you're babysitting and a toddler develops a high fever or starts vomiting? Find out how to care for a younger child who is sick or hurt and how to recognize common medical emergencies.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

- Take a babysitting class.** Find a class that includes first aid.
OR
- Ask a medical professional.** Invite an expert such as a pediatric nurse or doctor to talk to your group about how to treat minor illnesses and injuries when caring for younger children. Find out what to do if the problem isn't minor, including whether you should handle it or hand it over to someone with more experience.
OR
- Talk to child care professionals.** Interview three people who work with children at a day-care center, camp, or your Girl Scout council about different medical emergencies they have encountered and how they handled them.

Careers to Explore

- Pharmaceutical researcher
- Veterinarian
- Physical therapist
- First aid instructor
- Nursing aide
- Girl Scout camp counselor
- Paramedic
- Pharmacist
- Dentist
- Doctor
- Athletic trainer
- Massage therapist
- Nutritionist
- Chiropractor
- Wilderness guide



STEP

2 Know how to use everything in a first aid kit

A first aid kit contains everything you need to treat minor injuries. But how do you use gauze, anyway? And what do you do with that triangle-shaped bandage? Know how to use each piece of a first aid kit, and how to tell a minor injury from a more serious condition, by completing a choice below.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Talk to a medical professional. You might visit your school nurse or a doctor at a local clinic. Ask her or him to show you how to use each piece of a first aid kit, then try it yourself.

OR

Take a course. Find one that includes information on using a first aid kit.

OR

Talk to an emergency responder. Ask an emergency medical technician (also known as an EMT) to visit your group and teach you to use the different pieces of a first aid kit. Divide into teams and practice using items in the kit on each other.

FOR MORE FUN: Make this a contest! Invite an EMT, firefighter, doctor, nurse, or Red Cross representative to be a judge.

Personalize Your Kit

Be sure to include:

- personal medications, if any
- emergency phone numbers and contact information
- information on any allergies
- any other items recommended by your doctor

Keep your kit up to date by:

- checking expiration dates and replace used or out-of-date contents
- making sure flashlight batteries work



Make Your Own First Aid Kit

The Red Cross recommends that all first aid kits for a family of four include the following:



Bandages: an assortment of adhesive bandages, gauze, and adhesive cloth tape

Not Shown:
• Oral thermometer
• Breathing barrier
• Blanket

Survival Blanket

A survival blanket—also called a Mylar, solar, first aid, or thermal blanket—could save your life in an emergency. The blankets were first developed by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) for use in space. They are made by coating a thin sheet of plastic with a reflecting agent. This agent reflects your body heat back into the body. If a person is injured on a hiking trip, a survival blanket can keep her warm while other people go for help. They may also be used to wrap a person who has fallen into cold water or to stay warm if the temperature drops suddenly on an overnight camping trip.



STEP 3 Find out how to prevent serious outdoor injuries

What do you do if someone breaks a leg while you're hiking in the mountains? Or how do you help someone who has nearly drowned on a boat trip? Find out about the people who deal with wilderness emergencies.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

- Talk to first aiders.** Interview certified wilderness first aiders who work with your Girl Scout council. Find out more about how to prevent serious injuries, how they treat these injuries when they happen, how you can get help if someone is injured, and what to do while you're waiting for help to arrive.

OR

- Ask a wilderness expert.** Invite a park ranger or member of a wilderness search-and-rescue squad to talk to your group about how to prevent serious injuries. Find out more about how they treat these injuries, how you can get help if someone is injured, and what to do while you're waiting for help to arrive.

OR

- Find out about common injuries.** Go online and research injuries suffered by people participating in an outdoor activity you enjoy, such as canoeing or skiing. Interview someone from a search-and-rescue squad or emergency response unit about how they treat those injuries, how you can get help if someone is injured, and what to do while you're waiting for help to arrive.

SPRAIN SAVVY

What should you do if you or a friend sprains an ankle? Many muscle, bone, and joint injuries can be treated by following four steps, called **RICE**. That stands for Rest, Immobilize, Cold, Elevate.



Rest.

Don't move or straighten the injured area.

Immobilize.

Stabilize the injured area in the position in which you found it. Splint the injury only if the person must be moved and it doesn't cause more pain.

Cold.

Put ice in a plastic bag or damp cloth. Apply it to the injured area for up to 20 minutes at a time. Remove it for at least 20 minutes and then repeat if necessary. Always keep a barrier, such as plastic or cloth between ice and bare skin to reduce the risk of damaging skin and other soft tissue.

Elevate.

Propping up the injured leg or arm on something soft like a pillow or blanket will help reduce the swelling and make the person more comfortable. Do not elevate the injury if it causes more pain.



Shock

People often say they're "in shock" when something surprising happens, but the medical term is very serious. When a person is in shock, her body is not getting enough blood flow. Shock can be caused by several things, including heart problems, severe allergic reactions, or heavy bleeding from an injury.

STEP 4 Know the signs of shock and know how to treat it

Sometimes injured people act strangely after an accident or traumatic event. Find out what to do in this step.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Research the signs of shock and how to treat it. Discuss what you've learned with your family or Girl Scout group.

OR

Interview a doctor or nurse about the signs of shock. Find out how you can help someone who is in shock, including how to get information from them that will help them get treated.

OR

Ask an EMT or first responder to talk to your group. Find out how you can help someone who is in shock, including how to get information from them that will help them get treated.



STEP

5 Learn to prevent and treat injuries due to weather

Whether you're snowshoeing in the depths of winter or hanging out on the beach on a summer day, extreme temperatures can make you sick. Learn the signs of heatstroke, frostbite, hypothermia, and hyperthermia, and how to treat them.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Take a first aid course. Find one through your Girl Scout council or local Red Cross chapter that covers the warning signs and basic care for minor heat- and cold-related injuries.

OR

Ask a park ranger, lifeguard, or ski patrol member. Invite them to talk to your group about how to recognize the warning signs of heat- or cold-related injuries, how you can care for minor cases, and how to know when you need to get help.

OR

Interview a doctor or nurse. Ask about how to recognize the warning signs of heat- or cold-related injuries, how you can care for minor cases, and how to know when you need to get help.



Hypothermia

Hypothermia (lowered body temperature) occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. This can happen when wind, moisture, and cool temperatures draw heat away from the body at a rapid rate. A cool, breezy, drizzly day—even when the temperature is above freezing—can be more dangerous in terms of hypothermia than a calm, dry, cold day.

Being prepared is one of the best ways to prevent hypothermia. Stay warm in cold weather by dressing in layers and wearing a hat. Wool garments insulate well even when wet, but cotton holds moisture next to the skin and dries slowly. Prevent getting wet by covering up or immediately changing wet clothes. Eat high-energy foods and drink hot liquids.



Add the Badge to Your Journeys

Becoming a leader is full of adventures, and it's always best to be prepared for anything that could happen along the way. Your first aid skills will help you live the Girl Scout motto as you head out on your Journeys to make the world a better place.

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Educating others about staying safe while enjoying the outdoors
- Being prepared to treat minor injuries with a first aid kit
- Sharing my knowledge about caring for children with friends who are just starting to babysit



I'm inspired to: