

First Aid Skills Every Caregiver Needs to Know | Senior First Aid Care

By [In Home Care](#) | December 17th, 2018



Being a caregiver in general certainly has its up and downs, and when it comes to someone you love, those feelings are magnified.



Previous daily routines are in the past, and there might be days that you would welcome them back; however, your love for elderly people is the driving force behind your passion and the reason why you want to be the best at what you do.

If you're a traveling caregiver or have a senior living in your home, it's a good idea to know some quick first aid tips and caregiver first aid. Elderly people have a higher risk of falling and are more injury prone than younger people. Knowing elderly first aid can make a difference in healing and recovery times, especially in the case of an emergency. Here are some tips for senior first aid and basic first aid tips that will help you when an accident or emergency happens under your watch.



Tips for Senior First Aid

Cuts:

Seniors are more susceptible to cuts and scratches because their skin is not as tough as it once was and takes longer to heal. Superficial cuts should be immediately cleaned with water and treated with an antibiotic ointment. Superficial cuts for seniors can heal faster without a band-aid, and for deeper cuts that are bleeding, place a sterile bandage on the wound and apply pressure. If the bleeding doesn't stop or appears to be very deep, call 911.

Bruising:

Seniors tend to bruise quite easily because their skin loses the fatty layer that once protected their capillaries. Medications like blood thinners and others, coupled with fall risk factors are the major contributors of bruising in seniors. Use a cold compress on the bruise, and wrap a towel over the skin and cold compress to secure it in place without causing pain or discomfort for the senior.

This will reduce swelling and blood flow to the bruised area and should make them more comfortable. If a bruise doesn't get better in three weeks, it's a good idea for them to see their health care provider as soon as possible.

CPR:

Caregivers who are not CPR certified can be instructed by the dispatcher until the paramedics arrive. CPR training programs can be found in your local area by contacting any public safety office, hospital or online resources.



What to do When a Senior Keeps Falling?

One of the first things you can do to lower the risk of falling for a senior is to see what safety improvements can be made in the home. Installing extra railings on stairs, bathrooms and other places where a senior spends a lot of time can help out tremendously. Make sure they have a good quality walker or cane and remove any area rugs that are a tripping hazard.

Additionally, routine visits to the doctor are important for vision checks and medication that could be attributed to the fall risk factors of a senior repeatedly falling. Proper diet and exercise are also very important for seniors to maintain a healthier lifestyle. Include them in trips to the store or anything that makes them move, and it will help them more than it hurts them.

If you have a senior in your care who falls a lot, it's a good idea to get them an automatic fall protection device. With a simple push of a button, they can let you know they've fallen or get medical assistance. For the small price of this device, it's worth its weight in gold because no matter where you are if the senior in your care falls, they will get immediate help.



How to Keep Elderly People From Falling Out of a Wheelchair

The risk of falling out of a wheelchair for an elderly person is something that is just going to happen from time to time. It's more about how a caregiver can respond to these falls and put preventative measures into place that makes a difference in recurrence. Other fall risk factors could be the senior's ability to get in and out of their wheelchair on their own. In this case, physical therapy can help an elderly person gain muscle strength and improve coordination.

Other tips include:

- Drop seats and lap bars installed on the wheel chair.
- Providing them a “reacher” to improve unbalance.
- Changing transfer surfaces for a better grip.
- Rearrange the room to put everything in reaching distance.



Caregiver First Aid Requirements

Caregiver training for elderly first aid is regulated by the Department of Health in each state. Every state has its own basic requirements and guidelines. In some cases, an eight-hour online training course is enough to be state certified as a caregiver, while a few states don't have any requirements at all.

The benefit of taking an online caregiver training course is to show your potential employer that you have the skills to perform quality and safe senior care as well as how important you take your role in this industry. Once you pass the basic exam, you can print and produce certification that shows you are a professional caregiver, and this does hold some weight for getting hired.

If you want to excel in this industry, being certified along with basic first aid skills and CPR certification, will give you the edge over other potential job candidates and make you a better caregiver.

Caring for the elderly takes a special kind of person, and the more skills you have, the more qualified you are to care for someone who can't do it on their own anymore. Training requirements for assisted living facilities, senior home care agencies, and nursing homes protect both caregivers and seniors.