First Aid – Stats and Facts

DID YOU KNOW?

Safe practices at work, home, and play can prevent many injuries, illnesses, and deaths. Once injury or sudden illness has occurred, effective first aid can be the difference between a rapid or prolonged recovery, a temporary or permanent disability, and even life or death. If that isn't motivation enough to make sure that you and your employees are first aid and CPR/AED trained, wait until you read the statistics.

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Statistics:

1. At work, injuries and illnesses kill about 2.2 million people in the world each year.
2. Unintentional injury is the leading cause of death in the U.S. for individuals younger than 44 years of age.
3. On average, 15 workers die each day in the U.S. from traumatic injuries.
4. More than 4 million workers suffer a nonfatal injury or illness each year.
5. In the U.S. about 1/3 of all injuries occur at home.
6. In the U.S. about 20% of injury deaths occur at home.
7. For every home injury death there are about 650 nonfatal home injuries.

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Are you and your employees ready to respond in an emergency? Having someone in your workplace that is trained in first aid to deliver initial emergency procedures until EMS arrives can be the difference between life and death. Are you and your employees ready to respond in an emergency?

Recent polling by the Red Cross shows that nearly 40 per cent of Canadians say they have been in an emergency situation where they have had to perform first aid; however, only 18 per cent are currently certified. Ahead of World First Aid Day September 8th, the Canadian Red Cross is calling on all Canadians to ensure they have the skills needed to save lives when an emergency happens.

“First aid is personal,” says Don Marentette, national manager of first aid programs with the Canadian Red Cross. “Canadians are more likely to use first aid skills to save the life of a loved one than anyone else. These are the stories you don’t often hear about, a mother saving her child from choking, for example.”

While many people believe first aid is usually administered on strangers, polling shows that nearly 60 per cent of Canadians who have had to provide first aid did so to help a family member.

“Although 68 per cent of Canadians say they can recognize the signs of a life-threatening health emergency, like choking or cardiac arrest, fewer than half believe they have the skills to provide life-saving basic first aid,” adds Marentette. “The Red Cross believes lapsed training and Canadians’ low confidence in their ability to save a life are directly related, and pose a risk in emergencies.”

There is a significant gap between Canadians’ perception of the importance of taking a first aid course, and actually taking one. Although nearly 98 per cent of Canadians say knowing how to perform first aid is important, 82 per cent have not taken a first aid course within the last three years.

We’ve featured several articles around CPR and First Aid, which are both universal skills that can benefit you in almost any scenario. However, if you’re still asking yourself the question, “Why do I need to know first aid?”, here are ten facts about CPR and First Aid Training to help provide an answer!

1. Sudden cardiac arrest* is the leading cause of death in adults (in 2015, 366,807 people died in the United States).
2. Most out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur in public settings (39.5%), homes/residences (27.5%), and nursing homes (18.2%).
3. CPR can double or triple a person’s chance of survival from sudden cardiac arrest and nearly 46% of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest victims survived when bystander CPR was administered.
4. Delivery of CPR is life-saving first aid, sustaining life until paramedics arrive by maintaining vital blood flow to the heart and brain.
5. If you aren’t trained in the combined rescue breathing and chest compression method of CPR, you can use compression-only CPR on a teen or adult who has collapsed.
6. Pediatric first aid is a specialized form of training that organizations often require staff to have if they are working with children, or that new parents can (and should) learn to support their babies and young children in the event of an emergency.
7. The use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) can save the lives of 30% or more of those who suffer cardiac arrest. The earlier defibrillation occurs, the better!
8. Each year, there are over 2 million Canadians injured unintentionally; injuries leave 47,000 Canadians either partially or totally disabled; and immediate first aid can make the difference between complete recovery and disability.
9. Most bystanders won’t give CPR because they’re either scared of getting involved or that they will perform CPR incorrectly. Even someone with no training is better than no CPR at all.

10. There’s no minimum age requirement to learn CPR. The ability to learn it depends on body strength and the ability to successfully perform chest compressions. Studies have shown that children as young a 9 years old can learn and retain CPR skills!

KEEP IN MIND

Mental Health First Aid is a training course designed to give members of the public the skills to help someone who is developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis. The evidence behind the program demonstrates that it builds mental health literacy, decreases stigmatizing attitudes, and helps individuals identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illness.

Canadian statistics show that one in five Canadians will experience a mental health problem this year. MHFA is an interactive workshop that teaches participants to recognize the signs that a person may be developing a mental health problem or experiencing a mental health crisis and how to provide initial help and guide the person to appropriate professional resources.

There are currently seven versions of MHFA with an additional one in development:

- Basic (12 hours)
- Adults who Interact with Youth (14 hours)
- Northern Peoples (18 hours)
- First Nations (20 hours)
- Inuit (3 days)
- Veteran Community (13 hours)
- Seniors (14 hours)
- Police (9 hours)

The course addresses four of the most common and most stigmatized mental health disorders and includes signs/symptoms, risk factors, and crisis first aid for specific situations:

- Substance-Related Disorders
    - Crisis First Aid for Overdose
- Mood-Related Disorders
    - Crisis First Aid for Suicidal Behaviour
- Anxiety and Trauma-related Disorders
    - Crisis First Aid for Panic Attack
    - Crisis First Aid for Acute Stress Reaction
- Psychotic Disorders
    - Crisis First Aid for Psychotic Episode

Additional sections are included in specific courses:

- Self-Injury Behaviour (Adults who Interact with Youth, Northern, and Inuit courses)
- Eating Disorders (Adults who Interact with Youth)
- Delirium (Seniors)
- Dementia (Seniors)

MHFA does not teach participants to become therapists or counsellors. Rather, it provides the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that allow someone to offer effective first aid intervention.

Emergency First Response region-specific (Americas) workplace courses offer a convenient, complete and ongoing solution to meeting regional workplace compliance standards in CPR, AED and First Aid training. Emergency First Response courses encompass adult, child and infant CPR and first aid skills, and incorporate Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) training and emergency oxygen use. Courses are flexible

in design to accommodate scheduling and training needs and can be taught together or alone in any combination.

Our courses meet OSHA Guidelines 29 CFR 1910.151 compliance standards for workplace safety at the local, regional and national levels. Courses follow Guidelines 2005 for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and emergency cardio-pulmonary care standards set by the Basic Life Support (BLS) Working Group of the International Liaison Committee on Resuscitation (ILCOR). New CPR & AED Course (Americas).

CPR & AED Course

This course is a stand-alone CPR and AED Course that takes about 2.5 to 4 hours to complete. It encompasses one and two rescuer CPR and AED training for adults with the option to include CPR and AED use on infants and children. The course is designed to meet regional and national compliance standards for workplace safety. Course materials support flexible delivery options, including the Emergency First Response Independent Study method, the video-guided approach and the Instructor-led technique.

The first step in any emergency is the recognition of the problem and providing help. When in doubt or when someone is seriously injured or ill, you should always activate the emergency response system by calling 911. If you're not sure how serious the situation is, the 911 operator will ask you a series of questions to determine the seriousness of it.

Remain on the line until additional help arrives, or until the 911 operator tells you to hang up. Emergency system dispatchers can guide you through the steps of performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), using an automatic external defibrillator (AED), or delivering basic care until additional help arrives.

Whether you are at home, work, or school, know where the first aid kit and the AED are kept and be familiar with their contents. Know how to activate the emergency response system (by calling 911 if in the United States). Be aware of any policies in the workplace regarding medical emergencies.

After determining the problem, the next step in providing help is to determine the unresponsiveness of the injured or ill person. The best way to determine this is to tap the person and talk loudly to them: "Are you okay?" After determining unresponsiveness, yell for help. Look for any medical identifications, such as a necklace or a bracelet. This may provide a valuable clue to the cause of the situation. One set of goals to keep in mind for first aid would be what we like to call the "Three P's."

THE THREE P'S

- **Preserve life**– your main goal should be to keep the person alive.
- **Prevent further injury**– keep the injured person safe and from becoming injured any more. It is always recommended that you do not move them until help arrives.
- **Promote recovery**– try to help fix their injuries as best as you can.

Why Employees Need First Aid Training

Whether the workplace is an office or a construction site, it has two common traits – valuable employees who may be injured or become ill and the need to protect them with adequate first aid procedures.

The good health and resulting productivity of employees is one area that is often overlooked as a means of improving a company's profitability. The size of this opportunity is indicated by a National Safety Council estimate that in 1997, there were more than 80 million lost workdays due to unintentional injuries. The astounding cost to American businesses was $127 billion, or an average of $980 per worker.

Whether employees work in a high-hazard or low-hazard environment, they face a variety of risks. Shock, bleeding, poisonings, burns, temperature extremes, musculoskeletal injuries, bites and stings, medical emergencies and distressed employees in confined spaces are just a sampling of the first aid emergencies which might be encountered in your business. These risks are compounded when employees don't feel well. Their lack of concentration can result in costly injuries.

If your employees aren't prepared to handle these types of injuries on all shifts and their coworkers are left untreated until an ambulance arrives, a victim's condition may worsen and injuries can become far more debilitating, which leads to greater medical costs and lost productivity.

It makes good business sense to provide first aid and appropriate training to all your employees. By making such a minimal investment in keeping your employees safe and well-trained, you could net big returns, along with a competitive advantage. Moreover, it's the law.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires businesses to provide first aid and CPR training to employees in the absence of a nearby clinic or hospital. While safety always begins with prevention, not every work-related injury can be prevented. Your primary first aid training goal should be to give employees the necessary tools and information they need to care for an ill or injured person, if necessary, until advanced help arrives.

"The outcome of occupational injuries depends not only on the severity of the injury, but also on the rendering of first aid care," writes OSHA in its 1991 Guidelines for Basic First Aid Training Programs. "Prompt, properly administered first aid care can mean the difference between life and death, rapid vs. prolonged recovery, and temporary vs. permanent disability." Since each site is so different, OSHA requires first aid training to be specific to the needs of the workplace. Proper training varies with the industry, number of employees and proximity to emergency care.

Although OSHA's 1991 guidelines specify the requirements for a first aid program, OSHA does not teach or certify programs. Therefore, employers are faced with numerous programs to choose from, and the choice can be difficult. Because of this, a consensus group comprised of a panel of government and private experts developed the National Guidelines for First Aid in Occupational Settings in 1997.

This new and detailed curriculum identifies the skill training that makes a workplace first aid responder competent to provide care. Responding to OSHA's requirement that every employer provide first aid assistance in the workplace, these guidelines document the minimum knowledge and skills necessary for an individual to provide basic life support care to an ill or injured person until professional emergency response arrives.

While starting a first aid program can be simple and inexpensive, it involves several essential steps:

Recognize that it is your responsibility as an employer to determine the requirements for your first aid program. As you assess your workplace, be mindful of the jobsite or work process that could cause illness or injury to employees. What types of accidents could reasonably occur in your workplace? Consider such things as falls, hazardous machinery and exposure to harmful substances. Be sure to put your evaluation in writing for reference purposes. Remember that, while OSHA does not recommend nor approve programs, it may evaluate your program's adequacy during an inspection.

Assess the location and availability of a medical facility to your workplace. If a hospital, clinic or other such emergency response is not readily available, for instance, within three to four minutes, you must have at least one employee trained in first aid and CPR per shift. There is no recommended number of trained employees

to have on staff; it largely depends on your facility's size and type of operations. Responding in a timely manner can mean the difference between life and death, so it is crucial that you have an appropriate number of employees trained.

For organizations in multiple sites, such as construction operations, a larger number of employees must be trained. Many experts believe all employees should know how to provide first aid and CPR to ensure that help is always at hand. At a minimum, each department or location should have a responder available on each shift.

Make sure you have suitable first aid supplies readily available at all times. Effective Aug. 17, 1998, OSHA added an Appendix A to its very basic First Aid and Medical standard found in 29 CFR 1910.151. It requires the employer to reference ANSI Z308.1-1978, Minimum Requirements for Industrial Unit-Type First Aid Kits.

According to OSHA, the contents of the kit listed in the ANSI standard should be adequate for small worksites. However, larger or multiple operations should consider the need for additional first aid kits and additional types of first aid equipment and supplies in larger quantities. OSHA suggests consulting a local fire and rescue department appropriate medical professional or first aid supplier for assistance in these circumstances.

OSHA recommends you periodically assess your kit and increase your supplies as needed. Place your first aid supplies in an easily accessible area, and inform all your employees of its location. Along with a well-stocked, workplace-specific first aid kit, other basic supplies normally include emergency oxygen, blankets, stretchers, directional signs, eyewash stations and burn stations.

In addition to these items, if blood-related incidents are anticipated, you must provide appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) as mandated in OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens standard (29 CFR 1910.1030). It lists specific PPE for this type of exposure, such as gloves, gowns, face shields, masks, and eye protection.

On-site safety inspections, review of hazards and emergency dispatch, assessment, implementation, escape and treatment should be discussed in your training program. Employees must be trained to act and think quickly to avoid delayed treatment during an emergency. Ask yourself, whether each employee knows how to report an injury or illness.

Outline the accident investigating and reporting procedures and relay that to your employees as part of your company's policy. Early recognition and treatment of an injury or illness is essential.

Employees must be aware of emergency contact information. It is best to post emergency procedures and emergency office contact numbers with your first aid supplies or in another highly visible and accessible area. Make sure that your field personnel also have suitable supplies and office contact numbers readily available. Appoint an employee in each department to watch for hazards and evaluate its current first aid status. Set a deadline to report any hazards or first aid needs to a manager or supervisor for improvement or correction.

Since people tend to forget their first aid training over time, OSHA recommends refresher training be conducted to recharge employees' knowledge of first aid procedures. At a minimum, employees should be certified annually to perform CPR and once every three years to perform first aid. If such training sounds burdensome, consider that it can produce safer work practices and fewer incidents among employees.

Keeping the workplace safe involves three basic elements: steps to prevent or minimize accidents, adequate first aid supplies and proper first aid training. The employer uses training to make sure its employees know what to do, how to do it and who is in charge in case a first aid or emergency situation occurs. Proper first aid

training not only satisfies OSHA requirements, but fosters good will among employees, who recognize the care that their company expends to provide a safe and healthy environment for its most valuable asset: its employees.

Not every job is dangerous, but every employer is responsible for the safety of their employees in the workplace. One of the best ways for employers to meet their legal and moral obligations to their employees is to provide first aid training to employees. Having employees trained provides benefits that aren't always obvious. In this article we'll look at some of the ways that first aid training can benefit both employers and employees.

Benefits for employers

1. Faster response during an emergency

In the event of an emergency, a fast employee response can save lives. Employees trained in first aid will understand the steps to take during an emergency, thanks to increased confidence and preparation. A quick response can reduce recovery time, leading to less time lost from injuries.

2. Reduce workplace accidents through awareness

First aid training helps employees learn to be more conscious of safety in the workplace, leading to a reduced number of accidents and injuries. Minimizing risk to workers and decreasing workplace incidents is a benefit to everyone, but for employers it has implications within all aspects of business operations.

3. A more positive work environment

By making first aid training available to employees, employers can show their workforce that they care about providing a safe work environment. First aid training provided in the workplace can even be used as an excellent team-building exercise and morale booster.

Benefits for employees

Safety in the workplace

Employees benefit from others around them receiving first aid training because it keeps them safer. Besides the benefits to employers that we've already noted, a safe work environment is an attractive benefit for employees.

Safety at home

Training in first aid is just as useful outside of the workplace. Knowing first aid could someday help to save the life of a friend or family member. First aid training is especially important for anyone living with someone at risk of cardiac arrest.

Safety while working alone

First aid training can teach employees how to properly use first aid kits, and to stay calm during an emergency. These skills are important for providing first aid to others, but for employees who work alone these same skills could help buy time until help can arrive.