Teacher guidance

KS2 Bites and stings

This guidance sheet is designed to support teachers who are new to teaching basic first aid using our first aid resources. Before delivering any first aid skills, teachers must feel confident that they have the relevant knowledge and competency to safely teach the required techniques.

The content of this guide covers how to identify when a casualty is having an allergic reaction to a bite or sting and how to treat a casualty who is suffering from a bite or sting. In addition, there is some further information that may be useful to support the successful delivery of our bite and stings sessions.

Please note that due to the possibility that a casualty who is suffering a bite or sting may become unresponsive and not breathe normally (through possible wounds or severe allergic reactions), it is advised that pupils are taught the basic life support topic prior to this session.

ANIMAL/HUMAN BITES

- Bites can crush and damage tissues of skin. Small and sharp pointed teeth may cause puncture wounds easily. Larger sharp teeth may do serious harm by causing a large wound
- The size of mouth may have an impact on size of wound and a bite with venom (eg snake) could be fatal

What to look for

- Puncture wounds caused from a bite
- A break in the skin that may bleed.

Why are we seeking medical advice?

- Human/animal bites can lead to a high risk of infection, and other serious infections such as rabies. It is also worth asking the casualty about tetanus immunisation if they have;
- A dirty wound
- Have never been immunised.
- Are uncertain about the number and timings of their immunisations.

What to do

1. Thoroughly wash the wound
2. Raise and support the wound, then cover it with a sterile dressing
3. If the wound is deep, dirty or you suspect rabies, call 999 straight away.

0986200-GUD-V1.0

© 2024 St John Ambulance

TICK BITES

- Ticks are very small, spider-like creatures which can be found in woodlands or grass. Ticks attach themselves to passing animals (including humans) and bite into the skin, sucking the blood
- They can carry diseases so should be removed as soon as possible. Otherwise you may develop Lymes disease.

What to look for

- An insect swelling to the size of a pea stuck to someone's skin.

Why are we seeking medical advice?

- Ticks may carry many different infections such as Lyme disease, and that's why getting medical advice is important
- Take the tick and seal it in a plastic bag, as it may be requested for analysis by medical professionals.

What to do

1. Using tweezers, grasp the tick's head close to the skin and gently pull upwards
2. Collect the remnants together in a sealed plastic bag
3. Advise casualty to seek medical advice.

INSECT STINGS

- Insect stings can be painful but are not usually dangerous. However, if the insect sting is in the mouth or throat this can be more serious as it could lead to swelling of the airway and obstruction.

What to look for

- Pain at the site of the sting
- Redness and swelling around the site of the sting.

Caution

- Watch for signs of an allergic reaction, which can lead to anaphylactic shock.

What to do

1. Reassure the casualty
2. If a sting is visible brush or scrape it sideways with the edge of a card or your fingernail
3. Raise the affected area – apply cold compress to minimise swelling
4. Keep cold compress in place for at least 10 minutes – monitor vital signs and watch for signs of an allergic reaction
5. Call 999 or 112 – If casualty shows signs of an severe allergic reaction or becomes unresponsive.

© 2024 St John Ambulance