

Case study notes 1 - 5



Case Study 1

Your teammate was sucking a boiled sweet when they tripped on a tree root. They clutch their throat and can't talk.

What would you do?

- You should ask them: "Are you choking?"
- You should encourage them to cough, if they can
- You should remove anything obvious from their mouth
- If still choking, you should give them up to five back blows. You need to stop if the obstruction clears
- If the obstruction doesn't clear, you need to give up to five abdominal thrusts
- If they are still choking you should dial 999 or 112 for emergency help
- Repeat back blows and abdominal thrusts until the obstruction clears. If they become unresponsive prepare to start CPR
- If you used abdominal thrusts, they must seek medical advice.



Case Study 2

It is a beautiful sunny day and your group have just walked up a steep hill. One of your team mates is only wearing a t-shirt and shorts. You stop for lunch at the top of the hill and they start to shiver.

What would you do?

- You should take the casualty to a sheltered place as quickly as possible. This could be coming off the top of the hill, or creating shelter with a tent or an emergency shelter
- Remove and replace any wet clothing and make sure the head is covered
- Protect the casualty from the ground by laying them on a sleeping mat and put in a dry sleeping bag
- If the condition does not improve call 999/112 or send for emergency help. Ideally, two people should go for help and stay together if you are in a remote area. It is important that you do not leave the casualty by themselves
- Give warm drinks and high energy food if available.



Case Study 3

It is a hot sunny day and your DofE group are just finishing a particularly hard leg. One of your teammates has been complaining of a headache, they are hot, flushed and have dry hot skin.

What would you do?

- Help your team-mate to a cool, shady place. You may have to create your own shade using an emergency shelter
- Encourage them to lay down and raise and support their legs
- Give them plenty of water to drink
- Monitor your team-mate and seek medical help.



Case Study 4

Your expedition team stop for a snack and share around a bag of fruit and nut. One of your team starts to experience difficulty in breathing, has swelling around the mouth and a red rash starts to appear.

What would you do?

- Ask if the member of your team has any allergies
- Move the bag of fruit and nuts away from the casualty, or the casualty away from the food
- Allow the casualty to take their allergy medication (usually a tablet if there is mild irritation) or auto-injector (if they are at risk of a severe allergic reaction)
- Call 999 or 112 if the casualty does not improve or if they have used their auto-injector.



Case Study 5

You and your team are walking along a bridleway. You notice your friend's eyes are running, they are sniffing and sneezing a lot.

What would you do?

- Ask if the member of your team has hay fever
- If possible move the casualty away from the trigger
- Allow the casualty to take their hay fever medication
- Seek medical advice if the condition does not improve.

Case study notes 6 - 10



Case Study 6

After a long days walk you get into your tent with your tent mate and take your boots off. You notice an unusual pea sized lump stuck to your friends leg.

What would you do?

- Treat for a tick bite
- Remove the tick from the skin using tweezers or a tick remover. Grasp the tick's head as close to the casualty's skin as you can and gently pull the head upwards using steady even pressure
- Save the tick for identification
- Seek medical advice.



Case Study 7

It is raining and you and your team are walking down a slippery hillside. Your team mate slips and rolls on their ankle. The ankle is swollen and appears painful.

What would you do?

- You should be careful not to slip over as well
- Help the casualty to sit down. You should support the ankle with coats and jumpers to keep it in a comfortable position
- You should put up a tent or emergency shelter to protect the group from the rain
- You should dial 999 or 112 for emergency help or Mountain Rescue depending on the location.



Case Study 8

After a short rest break your team mate is putting their heavy rucksack back on, they drop it and scream in pain. You notice their arm is hanging at an odd angle and the joint looks funny.

What would you do?

- Advise the casualty to keep still and support the injured arm in the position they find most comfortable
- Immobilise the injured arm with a sling
- Arrange to take or send the casualty to hospital or dial 999 or 112 for emergency help. If in a remote area consider asking for mountain rescue and erecting an emergency shelter.



Case Study 9

You are walking along a field boundary when you come across a stile. One of your team members trips over the top and lands heavily on their arm. They scream out in pain.

What would you do?

- Advise the casualty to keep still and support the injured arm in the position they find most comfortable
- You should try and support it using coats and jumpers or a sling if you have one
- You should dial 999 or 112 for emergency help. If in a remote area consider asking for Mountain Rescue and erecting an emergency shelter.



Case Study 10

You and your team are very tired after day 1 of your expedition. One person is cooking your boil in the bag meals whilst the rest of the team put the tents up. You hear a scream and notice your team mate has tripped over a guy rope knocking the boiling water onto her arm.

What would you do?

- Their arm should be flooded with cold water for at least 10 minutes, (the campsite may have outdoor taps which you can use)
- Any jewellery should be removed if possible before the injured area begins to swell
- You should put on disposable gloves, if available
- A clean plastic bag or cling film applied length-ways can be used as a temporary covering
- You should cover the area with a sterile dressing or a clean non-fluffy pad and bandage loosely in place
- If the burn is severe seek medical advice.

Case study notes 11 - 15



Case Study 11

You are walking across a field for approximately 6km on a hot, sunny day. You notice your team mate looks extremely red and has not been wearing a hat.

What would you do?

- You should move your team-mate out of the sun or, if at all possible, indoors
- Pour cool water over your team-mate to cool them down for 10 minutes
- You should give them frequent sips of cold water
- For mild burns, calamine or after-sun may soothe
- For severe burns seek medical help
- Check the rest of your team, make sure everyone is wearing sun cream and has their skin covered.



Case Study 12

You are cycling towards your lunch stop and have been looking for somewhere to stop for water for the last 3 hours. Your friend has had a headache for around 45 minutes and hasn't been to the toilet since the morning. They start to feel dizzy.

What would you do?

- Reassure your friend, help them to sit down and get them plenty of water to drink
- Water is usually sufficient but oral rehydration solutions can help with salt replacement
- Monitor your friend and seek further medical help if they continue to be unwell.



Case Study 13

One of your team members is scared of cows so decides to run to the other end of the cow field to stay away from them. When you catch up with them they are wheezing and have difficulty in breathing.

What would you do?

- You should reassure them and tell them to try to keep calm
- You should ask them whether they have their reliever inhaler, and tell them to use it
- You should help them to sit in a position which feels comfortable, removing their backpacks
- If they do not improve within a few minutes they may take one or two more puffs from the inhaler every two minutes until they have had ten puffs
- If the inhaler has no effect you should dial 999 or 112 for emergency help. If in a remote area consider asking for Mountain Rescue and erecting an emergency shelter.



Case Study 14

You have stopped for lunch when a walker you saw earlier in the day is walking towards you. He appears to be very unsteady and shaky, is showing signs of confusion, is unsure of where he is and is asking for help. You notice a medical alert bracelet on his wrist.

What would you do?

- Reassure the casualty. Sit them down. Check their medical bracelet - this tells you that they are a diabetic
- Ask them if they have any Glucogel or sweets on them
- Get Glucogel or sweets from the bag and hand them to the casualty
- If they need and are able to check their blood sugar levels encourage them to do this
- Advise them to have a proper meal
- Advise seeking further medical assistance if required
- Consider if they can carry on safely or do they need further help.



Case Study 15

One of your team woke up late and didn't have time to eat their breakfast, they haven't eaten anything all morning. They are becoming angry and become upset very easily. They are shaky and eventually admit that they are starting to feel faint.

What would you do?

- Help your team mate to sit down
- Give them a sugary drink, chocolate or other sweet food, this could come from your emergency rations
- If they respond quickly, you should let them rest and give more food until they feel better
- If they do not improve you should seek medical help.

Case study notes 16 - 20



Case Study 16

On the second day of your hike, one of your team members who has Type 1 diabetes is noticed to be drinking a lot of water. They have emptied their water bottle twice already and are borrowing others.

Their breath smells of fruit sweets.

What would you do?

- Are they able to test their glucose levels? If so advise them to do so. Do they take insulin? Have they missed a dose? Are they in a position to take their insulin?
- If they are unwell call 999 or 112 straight away for medical help and say that you suspect hyperglycemia
- While you wait for help to arrive, keep checking their breathing, pulse and level of response
- If they lose responsiveness at any point, open their airway, check their breathing and prepare to treat someone who's become unresponsive.



Case Study 17

You are half way through your day's walking when your friend's foot starts to hurt. It is the first time they have worn their new walking boots and when they take off their boot and sock they find that they have a blister.

What would you do?

- Wash the area with clean water and pat skin around blister dry
- Do not burst the blister unless it is very large and it hinders mobility
- If unable to wash the area keep it as clean as possible
- Cover with an adhesive dressing. Make sure the pad of the plaster is larger than the blister. Ideally use a special blister plaster
- Be aware of stopping in an outdoor environment e.g. will people in your group get cold if you stop?



Case Study 18

You are walking along a river bank and see an upturned canoe floating in the water. You then notice someone getting pulled out of the water. They are lying on the bank, soaking wet and unresponsive.

What would you do?

- Take care to avoid putting yourself in danger when working near water
- Carry out a primary survey, if they are breathing normally put them in the recovery position, remove wet clothing and keep them warm
- If not breathing normally shout for help and call 999/112 for emergency help. Open the airway and begin CPR starting with 5 initial rescue breaths.



Case Study 19

Two of your friends are walking ahead of you and are mucking about, one of them slips and slides down the side of the path. It is not steep so it is safe to make your way to them.

When you get there your friend is crying and in pain, there is a lot of blood on their leg.

What would you do?

- If there is nothing in the wound you should apply direct pressure to the wound to try and stop the bleeding
- Ask a bystander to call 999 or 112 for emergency help
- Secure the dressing with a bandage that is firm enough to maintain pressure but not too tight to stop the circulation
- Call 999/112 for emergency help if this has not already been done
- Treat for shock by lying the casualty down on something to protect them from the cold and raise their legs.



Case Study 20

After a long day your team finally get their tent up and can't wait to get their boots off. You are all running around in your socks when a team mate steps on a tent peg that was left in the ground and it gets stuck in their foot.

What would you do?

- Everyone should be careful not to cut themselves on any other tent pegs and put their boots back on
- You should not try to remove the tent peg, but apply pressure on both sides of the peg. Drape a piece of gauze over the wound and object
- If you can, build up padding on either side of the peg until it is high enough for you to be able to bandage over the top of the object without pressing it further into the wound
- Call 999/112 for emergency help. Monitor circulation in the foot. Treat for shock if necessary.

Case study notes 21 - 25



Case Study 21

Towards the end of your expedition everyone is starting to feel tired. One of your team mates finds a perfect stick to use as a walking aid. After a few minutes they realise they have got a splinter.

What would you do?

- Gently clean the area around the splinter
- Using tweezers, draw the splinter out at the same angle it went in
- Gently squeeze the wound to encourage a little bleeding to dislodge any remaining dirt from the wound
- Cover wound with a sterile dressing.



Case Study 22

It is a hot day and a member of your group starts having a nosebleed while they are walking.

What would you do?

- Sit the casualty down
- Tilt the head forward and ask them to breathe through their mouth
- Get the casualty to pinch the soft part of their nose to stop the bleeding
- After 10 minutes check to see if still bleeding
- If still bleeding pinch nose for another 10 minutes. If bleeding has not stopped after a maximum of 30 minutes call 999/112 for emergency help
- Clean around the nose with water.



Case Study 23

Your team stop and decide to check their maps and route card to make sure they are where they think they are. A member of your group complains about feeling dizzy and light headed. You hear a thud and realise they have collapsed. They wake up quickly.

What would you do?

- Lay the casualty down and raise their legs to increase blood flow to the head
- When they feel ready, help them to sit up gradually
- Support them until they recover fully
- If they feel faint again, lie them down and raise their legs
- When recovered give them something to eat and drink
- Keep the group warm and hydrated while you are stopped.



Case Study 24

You are waiting to be picked up at the end of your expedition when someone suddenly falls to the ground making a funny noise and starts shaking uncontrollably.

What would you do?

- Move any objects that may cause harm away. Don't try to stop the movements. Note the time the seizure started
- Protect the casualty's head with soft clothing/towels/coats
- Loosen tight clothing around the casualty's neck
- Time the duration of the seizure, once the seizure is over, do a primary survey
- If breathing normally, place in the recovery position
- Monitor vital signs until they recover
- If not breathing normally start CPR
- Call 999/112 for emergency help if it is the casualty's first seizure, or the cause is unknown, they're having repeated seizures, the seizure lasts for more than 5 minutes or they are unresponsive for more than 10 minutes.



Case Study 25

You are walking to the pickup point at the end of a hike when the person in front of you trips over and bangs their head on a large stone.

What would you do?

- Sit the casualty down and apply a cold compress to the injury
- Assess their response using the AVPU scale and note if they are confused
- Treat any scalp wounds
- Monitor and record vital signs and watch especially for changes in level of response
- Advise them to seek medical advice if their condition worsens and if they are over 65, have had brain surgery, are taking blood thinning medication or the injury was a result of alcohol or drug intoxication
- Call 999/112 for emergency help
- When the casualty has recovered ensure a responsible person can look after them and seek medical help if their condition worsens.

Case study notes 26 - 30



Case Study 26

You are at the campsite when you see someone from a different group walk in with a handful of berries.

They start vomiting as you go over to them.

What would you do?

- Ask the casualty if they have been eating the berries, how many of them and when. Reassure them
- Call 999/112 for medical help and tell them as much information as possible
- Monitor their breathing, pulse and level of response
- If they become unresponsive, open their airway and check breathing. Treat for someone who is unresponsive. Use a face shield or mask to give rescue breaths if required
- Never try to make the casualty vomit, but if they vomit keep some in a bag or container and keep some of the berries and give it to the health care professionals, this may help them identify and treat the poison.



Case Study 27

You are on a hike when you come across another group of walkers.

They have stopped because one of the men is suffering from pains in their chest and looks pale and sweaty.

They don't know what to do.

What would you do?

- Call 999 or 112 for emergency help and say that you suspect a heart attack
- If there is no phone signal, ideally two people should go for help and stay together if you are in a remote area. It is important that you do not leave the casualty by their self
- Suggest that the casualty sits down in a supported half-sitting position which is often the most comfortable position
- If you or the casualty have an aspirin 300mg then the he should chew it slowly
- If they have any angina medication advise they take some
- Monitor and reassure the casualty until emergency help arrives
- Consider putting up an emergency shelter if it is cold and wet.



Case Study 28

A member of your group slips and hits their back against a rock.

They cannot move or feel their legs or the injury. They are panicking.

What would you do?

- Try to calm them down, reassure them and advise them not to move
- Ask a bystander to call for emergency help from the relevant service for the terrain you are on (Mountain Rescue, Ambulance, etc.)
- Steady and support their head in a neutral position by spreading your fingers and holding both sides of their head ensuring you do not cover their ears, they need to be able to hear you
- Ask a bystander to cover the casualty to keep them dry and warm
- Consider yours, the groups and the casualty's safety and the environment's potential dangers, do you need to use a group shelter? Sleeping bag? Hypothermia risk?
- Maintain the support to the head and neck until the emergency services arrive, for as long as it takes.



Case Study 29

You walk into your tent to put your rucksack away and find one of your group lying on their inflatable sleeping mat not moving. You can't wake them up.

What would you do?

- Shout for help
- Do a primary survey (DR ABC)
- If they are breathing normally put them in the recovery position
- Call 999/112 for emergency help
- If they are not breathing normally commence CPR
- If they are not breathing normally ask a bystander to call 999 or 112 for emergency help and bring an AED if available. If alone make the call yourself, then commence CPR.



Case Study 30

After a long days walking everyone is sat outside their tents playing card games. As the sun goes down the temperature starts to drop.

Your friend is only wearing a t-shirt and shorts. They start to shiver.

What would you do?

- You should take your friend inside their tent for shelter as quickly as possible
- Advise them to put on layers of clothing and make sure the head is covered
- Help them into a sleeping bag and protect them from the ground by laying on a sleeping mat
- Give warm drinks and high energy food if available
- If they do not improve you should seek medical help.

What else?

Cadets (ages 10-17)

As a Cadet, you'll have an exciting journey ahead of you. You'll get to meet new people, learn new skills, and build your confidence.

[Find out more by clicking here.](#)



Join SJA as a DofE Leader (18+)

St John Ambulance offers the DofE award to all of its young people, and we need enthusiastic volunteers to support them through this.

[Find out more by clicking here.](#)



Become a Youth Leader (18+)

You'll be volunteering with Badgers (aged 7-10) or Cadets (aged 11-18). You'll help to support them to care for others, gain new experiences, and learn important life skills.

[Find out more by clicking here.](#)



Donate and fundraise

Supporting St John Ambulance helps put our first aid trainers in schools, equip our volunteers and run our ambulances. Our training saves lives.

[Find out more by clicking here.](#)

