

COVID-19 First Aid Information

Background

Given the rapidly developing situation surrounding the current COVID-19 pandemic, we wanted to update you with some key advice for First Aiders with a duty to respond (such as workplace first aiders, sports coaches, etc.). We also are aware that the First Aid skills you have learned are not limited to use in the workplace, so we also wanted to make sure that you would remain safe if you become involved with a First Aid situation within your home or community.

Please ensure that you familiarise yourself with and carry out infection prevention and control measures (especially hand hygiene) when providing any First Aid.

First Aid Guidance

(From “Resuscitation Council UK Statement on COVID-19 in relation to CPR and resuscitation in first aid and community settings”)

Because of the heightened awareness of the possibility that the victim may have COVID-19, Resuscitation Council UK offers this advice:

- Recognise cardiac arrest by looking for the absence of signs of life and the absence of normal breathing. Do not listen or feel for breathing by placing your ear and cheek close to the patient’s mouth. If you are in any doubt about confirming cardiac arrest, the default position is to start chest compressions until help arrives.
- Make sure an ambulance is on its way. If COVID 19 is suspected, tell them when you call 999.
- If there is a perceived risk of infection, rescuers should attempt compression only CPR and early defibrillation until the ambulance (or advanced care team) arrives. Put hands together in the middle of the chest and push hard and fast.
- Early use of a defibrillator significantly increases the person’s chances of survival and does not increase risk of infection.
- If the rescuer has access to personal protective equipment (PPE) (e.g. FFP3 face mask, disposable gloves, eye protection), these should be worn.
- After performing compression-only CPR, all rescuers should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water; alcohol-based hand gel is a convenient alternative. They should also seek advice from the NHS 111 coronavirus advice service or medical adviser.

Symptoms suggestive of COVID-19

Casualties presenting with the following symptoms should be treated with a high suspicion of having contracted COVID-19:

- A persistent cough

and/or

- A fever (Temperature greater than 38)

Further Information

Resus Council UK Coronavirus statements:

<https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/>

<https://www.resus.org.uk/media/statements/resuscitation-council-uk-statements-on-covid-19-coronavirus-cpr-and-resuscitation/covid-community/>

COVID-19: guidance for public [Public Health England]:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-the-public>

COVID-19: Government response

<https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response>

NHS 111 COVID-19

<https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>