

# safety Toolbox Talks for matters

From your safety partners at PL&B Insurance

## First Aid Basics

If an employee is in the company of a co-worker who trips and starts bleeding, his or her knowledge of simple first aid basics may be essential.

### Bleeding

Should a co-worker receive a cut, the most important action is to stop the bleeding immediately. Employees should have the victim lie down, then apply direct pressure on top of the wound with a sterile pad or the cleanest piece of cloth they can find. If the cloth becomes saturated with blood, they should keep adding more pads or cloth and secure them with a bandage. If the wound is on an arm or a leg, and the blood flow is particularly hard to stop, employees can try pressing on the brachial or femoral arteries to reduce the flow. Always seek immediate medical attention for any profuse bleeding.

### Chemicals

Employees may also need to work with chemicals from time to time. Whenever possible, they should put on appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), including goggles and gloves. Should chemicals get into employees' eyes, they should use the emergency eyewash station. If one is not provided or nearby, they should dilute the chemical by pouring water into their eyes. Employees need to pour at least a quart of water into the corner of the eye so that it runs over the surface and flows out the other side.

If chemicals ever get onto employees' skin, they should wash the area repeatedly with large amounts of water and remove any contaminated clothing. Employees should always check the label on the chemical to see if any additional steps should be taken. Make sure employees know to call 911 if dizziness, nausea, chest pains or shortness of breath are present.

### Particles

If a foreign particle gets embedded into someone's eye, employees should not try to remove it like they would a chemical. Instead, they should have the victim lie flat, place a sterile pad over the eye, bandage it in place, and get medical help immediately. Employees should avoid movement that could drive the particle deeper into the eye. If the particle is under the eyelid or floating on the surface of the eyeball, they can try removing it with the corner of a clean piece of cloth. But they should never rub the eye to get it out.

### Shock

An accident often brings on a condition called shock. A person suffering from shock may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Weakness
- Confusion
- Cold, pale, clammy skin
- Nausea
- Vacant eyes with dilated pupils

To help someone in shock, employees should place the victim on his or her back with feet elevated, unless head or chest injuries are present, then raise the head and shoulders with pillows. Next, employees should place blankets over and under the body to conserve body heat. Fluids shouldn't be administered unless expert medical help is delayed for at least 30 minutes. If that is the case, then employees should give him or her half a glass of plain, lukewarm water every 15 minutes. They should discontinue fluids if the person becomes nauseated.

Remember, first aid is the best immediate response to an injury, but employees should always seek appropriate medical attention afterwards.

**Brushing up on first aid basics helps employees to be prepared in the event of an unexpected workplace accident.**



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