

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council

Patient Care Instructions

ABRASIONS

INSTRUCTIONS:

Care of abrasions at home is important. Wash the area with soap and water twice a day followed by antibiotic ointment and a clean dressing. If the dressing becomes dirty or wet, change it as soon as possible. If signs of infection (redness, swelling, pain, pus, fever) occur, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

ALCOHOL INTOXICATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Refrain from additional alcohol use.
2. Do not drive a motor vehicle or operate machinery.
3. Clear liquids for 6-8 hours followed by high protein and carbohydrate foods will help return you to normal, reducing the symptoms of a "hangover". Acetaminophen may be used for associated headache and body aches.
4. Go to the emergency department if you are unable to drink liquids because of persistent vomiting.

ALLERGIC REACTION

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If medications were prescribed, take them as directed.
2. If the cause of the allergic reaction was identified, be sure to avoid further exposure. Medications are always suspect in allergic reactions.
3. If a severe allergic reaction has occurred, it may be necessary to carry a kit for self-injection of Adrenalin (ANA-Kit or Epi-PEN).
4. If increased or recurrent swelling, rash or itching occur, call your personal physician.
5. If difficulty breathing, chest pain, sweating, weakness or fainting occur, call 9-1-1.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council Patient Care Instructions

ALLERGIC REACTION - BEE STING

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Keep the sting sites clean and dry. Avoid scratching to prevent secondary infection.
2. Hydrocortisone cream, antihistamine medications and cool compresses may help with the itching.
3. Anyone who has had a generalized allergic reaction to a bee sting should be seen by an allergy specialist for testing and possible desensitization.
4. If a serious reaction has occurred, an ANA-Kit or Epi-PEN for self-administration of Adrenalin should be carried at all times.
5. If there are any signs of a recurrent allergic reaction (hives, itching, swelling of the face, lips or throat, wheezing, weakness, vomiting) call 9-1-1 or go to the emergency department immediately.

ANXIETY REACTION

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Treatment of anxiety is dependent on the cause of the stress whether it is from situational circumstances, psychological illness, medical illness, or any combination of these factors. An on-going therapy is typically required. Call as soon as possible to arrange follow-up with a trusted physician or counselor.
2. When symptoms of anxiety develop, find a quiet place to sit or lay down to rest and relax for a few moments.
3. Avoid caffeine, cigarettes, alcohol, and street drugs if possible as these agents typically cause an increased stimulation and worsening of symptoms.
4. At times your physician may prescribe a short course of medication to help decrease your symptoms of anxiety. Take this medication only as prescribed.
5. If you develop symptoms of persistent chest pain or difficulty breathing that lasts longer than 5 to 10 minutes then please call your physician or go to the emergency department.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council

Patient Care Instructions

ASTHMA

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Careful use of asthma medications is important.
2. Avoid exposure to any factors which are known to or seem to worsen your asthma. Dust and pets are notorious problems.
3. Do not smoke! Ask others around you who do smoke to not smoke in your presence.
4. If you are having difficulty breathing, severe wheezing, productive cough, chest pain or other problems, call your personal physician, go to the emergency department, or call 9-1-1.

DEHYDRATION

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If possible, take lots of liquids by mouth.
2. Drinks containing electrolytes (e.g. Gatorade) are preferable to water. The return of normal urine volume and frequency suggests adequate hydration has been achieved.
3. If there is persistent vomiting or diarrhea, severe abdominal pain, fever, dizziness, weakness or fainting, confusion or headache, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

EPISTAXIS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If there is recurrent bleeding, keep head elevated, blow nose, pinch the nose firmly and hold it for 20 minutes without letting go.
2. If you are unable to control the bleeding, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council Patient Care Instructions

FEVER UNKNOWN ORIGIN - PEDIATRICS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If medications were prescribed, give them as directed; or take acetaminophen dose based on child's weight.
2. If there is high fever, coughing, lethargy or irritability, vomiting, or the condition appears to be getting worse, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

GASTROENTERITIS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If medications were prescribed, take them as directed.
2. Take acetaminophen for the control of fever.

Home treatment of diarrhea includes:

Rest.

2. Clear liquids for 24-48 hours.
3. Avoidance of dairy products for up to 7 days post onset of symptoms.
4. Initially stop solid food intake. As symptoms improve begin with toast, crackers, rice and bananas, then slowly advance diet.
5. If anti-diarrheal medications are prescribed, take as directed.
6. Antibiotics may be prescribed depending on exam and stool analysis.
6. Take "Pepto-Bismol" and/or "Kaopectate" per label instructions as these medications have been found to bind diarrhea causing toxins in the gut and may improve symptoms.

Home treatment for vomiting/dehydration includes:

1. Rest (exertion may worsen symptoms and speed dehydration).
2. Avoid over heating.
3. Push plenty of clear liquids, initially in small, frequent amounts (sips).
4. Clear liquids include: water, broth, tea, clear juices, soft drinks, "Jell-O", "Gatorade", and popsicles.
5. Take anti-nausea medications if prescribed by your personal physician.

CALL your physician, go to the emergency department, or call 9-1-1 if:

1. Vomiting has persisted without improvement for 6-12 hours.
2. You vomit blood or pass blood in your stool.
3. You have symptoms of dehydration associated with vomiting, such as dizziness, lightheadedness, or fainting.
4. You have severe headache associated with the vomiting.
5. You have severe abdominal or chest pain associated with vomiting.
6. You have a high fever (above 102 degrees F) associated with vomiting.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council

Patient Care Instructions

HEAD INJURY

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. After a head injury a patient may expect mild headache, nausea, occasional vomiting, drowsiness, and/or irritability. These symptoms normally last for several days. Most head injury complications will develop gradually allowing time for medical intervention.
2. Treatment of head injuries includes rest, ice packs, and over the counter pain relief (such as acetaminophen). Please rest as much as possible, sleep with your head raised slightly and take medications as directed. Initially even non-strenuous activity such as reading, school or work may make symptoms of headache and dizziness worse.
3. No evidence of serious injury has been found at this time, but careful attention for the next 24-48 hours is advised.
4. Patients should go to the emergency department immediately if any of the following signs occur:
 - Abnormal increase in sleepiness or difficulty in arousing the patient.
 - Projectile vomiting. Occasional mild vomiting may normally occur.
 - Continued or increased severe headache.
 - Convulsions, confusion or disorientation.
 - Watch children for increased fussiness, crying, restlessness and irritability.
5. Call your physician immediately or go to the emergency department if any of the following occur:
 - ▶ Double vision.
 - ▶ Stiff neck and fever.
 - ▶ Unequal pupils (one pupil larger than the other).
 - ▶ Weakness or loss of sensation.
 - ▶ Slurred speech.
 - ▶ Anything abnormal that worries you.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council Patient Care Instructions

HYPERTENSION

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If medications were prescribed, take them as directed.
2. Most cases of hypertension will benefit from a low sodium diet. This can be achieved by adding no salt to food in cooking and no salt at the table as well as avoiding obviously salty foods (e.g. ham, potato chips, etc.).
3. If you are overweight, weight loss will likely help in the management of your high blood pressure.
4. Check with your personal physician regarding diet.
5. If you experience chest pain, difficulty breathing, severe headache, visual disturbance, dizziness, weakness or bleeding, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

HYPERVENTILATION SYNDROME

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Rest, lie down in a quiet room.
2. If the symptoms do not resolve, breathe slowly in and out of a small paper bag for about 5 minutes.
3. If the symptoms still do not improve, call your physician or go to the emergency department.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council

Patient Care Instructions

HYPOGLYCEMIA

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Frequent, small, high-protein meals may be helpful in preventing hypoglycemia if it is not related to insulin or other medications.
2. If the signs or symptoms of hypoglycemia recur, immediately drink orange juice or other high sugar drinks (e.g. soda pop, not diet pop) and call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

INFLUENZA

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. If medications were prescribed, take them as directed.
2. Acetaminophen may be used for control of fever. Aspirin should not be taken if influenza is suspected because of an association with Reye's Syndrome.
3. If the symptoms are getting worse, or if confusion, vomiting, drowsiness, productive cough, or shortness of breath occur, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

LOW BACK PAIN

INSTRUCTIONS:

Aspirin or other anti-inflammatory medications may be helpful. The following are helpful in the management of low back strain.

- ▶ Rest and avoidance of activities which aggravate the pain.
- ▶ Mobilization and strengthening exercises after resolution of symptoms.
- ▶ Sleeping on a firm surface.
- ▶ Ice and/or heat.
- ▶ Physical therapy.

Whatcom County EMS Trauma Care Council

Patient Care Instructions

SPRAIN

INSTRUCTIONS:

Ice, rest, elevation and pain medication as needed help with the pain and swelling. Depending on the site, splinting or other immobilization may be necessary. If there is increasing pain, swelling, numbness or weakness, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.

VOMITING

INSTRUCTIONS:

Home treatment for vomiting includes:

1. Rest (exertion may worsen symptoms and speed dehydration).
2. Avoid over heating.
3. Initially do not take anything by mouth. Slowly resume drinking clear liquids (Gatorade, flat soda pop, diluted apple juice, popsicles, tea, etc.) in small amounts taken frequently. As symptoms improve, slowly advance your diet to include juice, soup and then low fat/high carbohydrate foods (rice, toast, potatoes, cereal, fruit).
4. Take anti-nausea medication if prescribed by your personal physician.
5. If you develop persistent vomiting, severe headache, high fever, vomiting blood, bloody stools, abdominal pain, weakness, fainting, or other problems, call your personal physician or go to the emergency department.