

First aid for poisoning

Poisons can be ingested, inhaled, absorbed or injected into the body. Children are especially vulnerable, both in likelihood of poisoning occurring and severity of reaction.

Signs and symptoms

Signs and symptoms depend on the nature of the poisons (which may be ingested, inhaled, absorbed or injected into the body).

- Abdominal pain
- Drowsiness
- Burning pains from mouth through to stomach
- Difficulty breathing
- Tight chest
- Blurred vision
- Odours on breath
- Change of skin colour, with blueness around the lips
- Sudden collapse.

WARNING

- **Do not** induce vomiting unless advised to do so by Poisons Information Centre.
- **Do not** give anything by mouth.
- Wash substances off mouth and face with water.

Management

Unconscious casualty

1. Follow **DRSABCD** action plan
 - Danger** – check for Danger.
 - Response** – check for Responsiveness.
 - Send for help** – Send for help. Call triple zero '000'.
 - Airway** – clear and open Airway.
 - Breathing** – check for normal Breathing.
 - CPR** – commence CPR if not breathing (30 chest compressions: 2 rescue breaths).
 - Defibrillator** – apply Defibrillator if available and follow prompts.
2. **Call triple zero '000' for fire and rescue** if atmosphere is contaminated with smoke or gas.

Conscious casualty

1. Follow **DRSABCD** action plan, ensuring triple zero '000' has been called.
2. Listen to casualty - give reassurance but not advice.
3. Try to determine type of poison taken.
4. Call **13 11 26** for Poisons Information Centre.
5. Send sample of vomit and any containers and / or suicide notes with casualty to hospital.



St John Ambulance (Qld) total first aid solutions | 1300 360 455 | www.stjohnqld.com.au

In an emergency call triple zero '000' for an ambulance

