

injection of adrenaline. If someone has an EpiPen (a pre-filled syringe with a concealed, spring-activated needle) help them to inject themselves then ask them to lie down and monitor the situation. If there is no improvement after 10 minutes, another dose of EpiPen can be given. Note the times of both doses.

Fainting⁶

SIGNS: Fainting is a sudden, temporary loss of consciousness that usually results in a fall. In most cases, when a person faints, they'll regain consciousness within a minute or two. However, less common types of fainting can be medical emergencies.

ACTION: If someone feels faint, encourage them to lie down, with their legs higher than their head if possible or sit with their head between their knees. If they faint and do not regain consciousness within one or two minutes, put them in the recovery position (see above) and call 999 or 112.

Seizure⁷

SIGNS: Seizures can take on many different forms and symptoms may include difficulty talking; drooling; repeated eye movements; lack of movement or muscle tone; tremors, twitching or jerking movements; repeated non-purposeful movements (called automatisms) such as, lipsmacking or chewing movements, repeated movements of hands, dressing or undressing, walking or running; convulsion; losing control of urine or stool unexpectedly; sweating; difficulty breathing; heart racing.

ACTION: Try to prevent injury. Do not restrain them but try to cushion their head. After the seizure, help them to rest on their side with their head tilted back.

Shock

SIGNS: Shock is a life threatening condition that occurs when the vital organs, such as the brain and heart, are deprived of oxygen due to a problem affecting the circulatory system. Symptoms include paleness; cold, clammy skin; fast, shallow breathing; rapid, weak pulse; yawning; sighing; in extreme cases, unconsciousness.

ACTION: Treat the cause of shock; lay the casualty down with their head low and their legs raised and supported. Dial 999 or 112, if you have not already done so. Then make the person comfortable by loosening any tight clothing; covering them with a coat or blanket; comforting and reassuring them. Also, check breathing and pulse frequently.

Stroke

SIGNS: The face may have dropped on one side and the person may not be able to move their facial muscles; they may not be able to lift their arms because of weakness or numbness; their speech may be slurred or garbled.

ACTION: Carry out the F.A.S.T. test to determine whether the person is displaying the symptoms above:

Face: is there weakness on one side?

Arms: can they raise both?

Speech: is it easily understood?

Time: to call the emergency services.

Diabetes⁸

SIGNS: Diabetes is managed by balancing medication, food and activity. When these fall out of balance hypoglycaemia (often referred to as a hypo) can occur. Common symptoms of a hypo are: feeling shaky, sweating, hunger, tiredness, blurred vision, lack of concentration, headaches, feeling tearful or moody, going pale.

ACTION: For a hypo, help the person to access fast acting carbohydrates (sugary drinks, sweets, fruit juices or glucose gels).

Heart attack

SIGNS: Symptoms can include: chest pain, which can travel to the arms (usually the left) and also the jaw, neck, back and abdomen; feeling lightheaded or dizzy; sweating; shortness of breath; nausea or vomiting; an overwhelming sense of anxiety (similar to having a panic attack); coughing or wheezing.

⁶ <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/Fainting/Pages/Introduction.aspx>

⁷ <http://www.epilepsy.com/learn/epilepsy-101/what-happens-during-seizure>

⁸ <http://www.diabetes.org.uk/Guide-to-diabetes/Complications/Hypos-Hypers/>