



Road & Transport First Aid

Emergency Information Booklet



Immediate steps to help at accident scenes
on Zimbabwe's roads

PROVIDED BY: **VITAL FIRST AID INTERNATIONAL**
Empowering communities with lifesaving skills

INTRODUCTION

Road accidents are one of the leading causes of injury and death in Zimbabwe. Whether traveling by car, kombi, truck, bus, bicycle, or on foot, emergencies can happen anywhere - often far from medical help.

This booklet gives you simple, practical steps you can use immediately after a road incident to help save lives before professional help arrives.

What you'll learn:

- How to stay safe at an accident scene
- How to check and help an injured person
- What to do for bleeding, shock, burns, and fractures
- Safe movement and transport of casualties
- What to include in a small travel First Aid kit
- When to call for further medical help

This is not a full training course - it's a quick, Zimbabwe-relevant guide for everyday people and communities.

We highly recommend you attend one of our certified First Aid courses, and purchase one of our top quality First Aid kits to ensure you are fully prepared for any emergency.

STEP 1:

CHECK YOUR SAFETY FIRST

Before helping anyone, protect yourself and others.

Look for dangers such as:

- Fast-moving vehicles
- Spilled fuel
- Broken glass or metal
- Fire or smoke
- Collapsed structures or electrical hazards

If it's safe:

- Park your vehicle safely
- Use hazard lights or warning triangles to warn other drivers
- Keep bystanders off the road
- Switch off vehicle engines if safe to do so

Never rush in without checking for danger - your safety allows you to help others.

STEP 2:

CALL FOR HELP EARLY

Even if you start First Aid, getting medical support quickly is essential.

Put bystanders to use. They can contact emergency services, help to move onlookers away from the scene, direct traffic or even assist in First Aid with your guidance.

If available, contact:

- Local ambulance service
- Nearest clinic or hospital
- Police (for traffic control and rescue)

Provide this information:

- Location (road name, nearby landmarks)
- Type of accident (vehicle collision, rollover, pedestrian)
- Number and condition of casualties
- Fire, fuel leak, or blocked road?

If phone networks are down or slow, send someone you trust to the nearest facility or closest network signal area to call for help.

STEP 3:

CHECK THE CASUALTIES

Assess the scene, check one person at a time if there are multiple casualties, and start with the most critical problems you can see. First check:

A – AIRWAY

- Is the person talking or making sounds? Then airway is open.
- If unconscious, gently open airway: lift chin with two fingers and tilt forehead back slightly (if no spinal injury suspected).

B – BREATHING

- Look: Is their chest rising?
- Listen: Any breathing sounds?
- Feel: Breath on your cheek?

If not breathing, start rescue breaths only if you have training. Otherwise, focus on opening the airway and getting help.

C – CIRCULATION (and bleeding)

- Look for major bleeding first
- Stop bleeding as quickly as possible

If someone is conscious, ask them where they feel pain.

STEP 4:

BLEEDING CONTROL

Severe bleeding can cause death within minutes.

Step-by-step:

1. **Apply firm pressure** over the wound with a clean cloth, bandage, or clothing.
2. If you have a **CHITOSAN product** on hand, fill or pack the wound with the granules or gauze.
3. **Keep pressure constant** for several minutes.
4. **Raise the injured limb** if there's no fracture.
5. **Secure the bandage** or cloth in place if possible.

If blood soaks through, place another cloth on top - do not remove the first one.

Do NOT:

- Use tourniquets unless absolutely necessary
- Clean deep wounds at the scene
- Remove deeply embedded objects

STEP 5:

TREATING SHOCK

Shock happens when the body doesn't get enough blood flow. It can be fatal if untreated.

Signs of shock:

- Pale, cold, or sweaty skin
- Fast breathing or weak pulse
- Dizziness or confusion
- Weakness or collapse

What to do:

- Lay the person on their back
- Raise their legs slightly (unless spinal injury suspected)
- Keep them warm with a blanket or jacket
- Reassure them and keep them calm
- Do not give food or drink

STEP 6:

FRACTURES / BROKEN BONES

Signs:

- Swelling or bruising
- Severe pain
- Deformity or inability to move limb

What to do:

- **Avoid moving the injury** if possible
- **Support and immobilise** using splints, cardboard, wood, or cloth.
- Pad between the splint and skin
- Tie above and below the injury, not on the fracture

Suspect spine or neck injury if:

- Person fell or was thrown
- Complains of neck/back pain
- Loss of sensation or movement

Keep head and body still. Do not twist or sit them up.

STEP 7:

BURNS

Burns often occur from hot engines, flames, or spilled fuel.

Immediate steps:

- Cool the burn with **clean, cool (not icy) water** for 10–20 minutes
- Remove tight clothing or jewellery **unless stuck to skin**
- Cover with a burns dressing and bandage, or cover loosely with a clean cloth or clingfilm
- Do not apply toothpaste, cooking oil, butter, or powder

Seek urgent care if:

- Burn is larger than the palm of the hand
- Involves face, neck, hands, groin, or chest
- Caused by fire, chemicals, or electricity
- Skin is white, charred, or blistered

STEP 8:

MOVING A CASUALTY SAFELY

Only move a person if there is danger (fire, traffic, unstable vehicle).

If movement is necessary:

- Support the head and neck
- Move in line with the spine
- Use a door, board, blanket, or multiple people if available
- Keep the body as straight as possible

Never drag by arms or legs unless it's the only option for survival

TRAVEL FIRST AID KIT ESSENTIALS

A small travel First Aid kit can save lives. Suggested items:

- Clean cloths or gauze pads
- Bandages (elastic and crepe)
- Triangular bandages or scarf
- Plasters
- Gloves (highly essential)
- Strong scissors
- Antiseptic wipes or solution
- Blanket or foil survival sheet
- Adhesive tape
- Notebook and pencil
- Emergency contact numbers

Encourage private cars, motorbikes, taxis, kombis, trucks and buses to keep one on board.

If you walk, run or cycle on the roads, carry a small First Aid kit with you, it can be invaluable for yourself and others.

Check out our website for essential travel First Aid kits to make sure you are prepared for journeys.

Vistt our website at www.vitalfirstaidint.com

IMPORTANT NOTE

COMMON MISTAKES TO AVOID

1. Rushing in without checking safety

- Always assess for traffic, fuel leaks, and fire before approaching the scene.

2. Moving casualties unnecessarily

- Avoid moving anyone unless there's immediate danger - spinal injuries are easily worsened.

3. Neglecting your own safety

- Stay visible, use hazard lights or warning triangles, and wear reflective gear if possible.

4. Forgetting to call for help early

- Contact emergency services immediately with clear details of the location and number of casualties.

5. Panicking or losing focus

- Stay calm and organised - panic spreads quickly and delays care.

6. Handling injuries incorrectly

- Don't remove helmets, give food or drink, or use dirty materials on wounds.

7. Ignoring hidden or internal injuries

- Watch for signs of shock, internal bleeding, or head injury even if the person seems fine.

8. Allowing crowding or chaos

- Keep the scene controlled and limit bystanders to protect privacy and safety.

9. Leaving too soon

- Stay until help arrives or it's unsafe to remain, and share any information with responders.

TRANSPORTING CASUALTIES

WHEN TO RUSH TO HOSPITAL

If you are in a remote location and cannot wait for emergency services to arrive, you may have to transport casualties to the nearest hospital or clinic. Seek medical care immediately for:

- Unconscious or unresponsive person
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe bleeding
- Major burns
- Suspected fractures or spinal injury
- Head injury with vomiting, confusion, or drowsiness
- Shock symptoms not improving
- Multiple casualties

Keep monitoring their breathing and responsiveness during transport.

VITAL FIRST AID INTERNATIONAL

Supporting Zimbabwean communities with:

Top quality First Aid kits

Training & awareness programmes

Workplace, school, and community safety resources

Contact us:

Phone / Whatsapp: **0773289601**

Website: **www.vitalfirstaid.com**

Other free resources available:

Fire Safety Training for Kids

First Aid Posters

Essential Checklists

BE PREPARED. ACT QUICKLY. SAVE LIVES