

ROWING RESCUE & EMERGENCY HANDBOOK
Emergency First Aid for Rowers

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SAFETY CHECKLIST

- Know the waterway (maps & patterns) []
- Check water temperature & weather []
- Check all your equipment: []
 - Rigging (stretchers, seats, oarlocks) []
 - Clothing (wool or poly for cold temp) []
 - Lights []
 - Cell phone on LOUD/marine radio []
 - Throw bag/ring []
 - Floatation (PFD or inflation belt) []
 - Emergency First Aid Kit []
 - Emergency tool kit []
- IS THIS HANDBOOK AVAILABLE? []

WIND, WAVES, LIGHTNING & FOG

Beware of winds over 10 mph and waves.
 DO NOT ROW in fog with limited visibility.
 At the first sign of lightning or sound of thunder head for the closest shore.
 At the first sign of squalls, rapidly forming clouds, or sudden changes in temperature or wind head for the boathouse or cover.
"Freak storms" are no longer freak events. They have taken rowers' lives in the past: global warming is making them stronger, more frequent and more dangerous.

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CAPSIZING/SUDDEN IMMERSION

- If you swamp
STAY IN YOUR BOAT! Bail it out.
- If you're in an accident
STAY IN THE BOAT! Call for help.
- If you're thrown out of the boat
SWIM TO THE BOAT and hold on.
- If there is no one to help you
HOLD ON TO THE BOAT!
 Try to get back in the boat
 Call or signal for help
- If the water feels cold
CONTROL YOUR BREATHING!
 Try once to re-enter the boat
 Inflate your life-jacket
 Get your arms over the boat
- Rescue Actions:**
 Approach from downwind/downriver
ACCOUNT FOR ALL ROWERS!
 Turn OFF your motor if possible
 Throw a rescue bag over the shell
 Don't overload or capsize your boat
- Don't go in the water unless it is absolutely necessary and you are wearing a life-jacket

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DROWNING

- Rescue Actions:**
If a person is drowning
 try to reach them or throw them flotation
- If someone has drowned
 1. Call 9 – 1 – 1
 2. Place them on a flat surface
 3. Check for responsiveness
 4. Check for breathing
 5. Check for pulse
- START CPR IMMEDIATELY IF A PERSON ISN'T BREATHING AND HAS NO PULSE**
 - > Fast and deep!
 - > 100 compressions per minute
 - > 1" – 2" deep
 - > Two rescue breaths may be given after each thirty compressions
- Maintain CPR until EMTs assume care!**
 If they resume breathing turn them on their left side and keep them warm.
- Don't go in the water unless it is absolutely necessary and you are wearing a life-jacket

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COLD SHOCK

Cold Shock is life threatening! It progresses rapidly in water below 50f/10c.

The 1-10-1 Rule:
 1 minute to control your breathing;
 10 minutes of swimming/muscle control;
 1 hour before hypothermia sets in.

- Gasping & racing heartbeat**
CONTROL YOUR BREATHING! Take deep, slow breaths.
- Rapid muscle & swimming failure**
Hold onto the boat. Inflate your life-jacket.
- Shivering – incipient hypothermia**
DO NOT SWIM! **Conserve your energy.**
- Rescue Actions:** Restore temperature with warm clothes and warm drinks.
- Hypothermia**
 Remain calm. Conserve your energy.
Rescue Actions: Move victims gently!
 Remove wet clothing; wrap in blankets; offer warm sugared liquids.
- Post-rescue collapse**
 Rowers have died from shock after rescue and before hospitalization.
- Rescue Actions:** Continue hypothermia care until EMTs arrive.

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HEAT STRESS

- Muscle Cramps**
 Painful muscle spasms may be a sign of heat stress. Drink fluids with electrolytes.
- Heat Exhaustion**
 Signs and symptoms may include pale skin, sweating, confusion, agitation, slurred speech, dizziness, racing pulse, headaches.
- Rescue Actions:** Remove or loosen excess clothing, sip water, juice, or sports drinks. Cool the body with water spray, sponge bath, or cold, wet towels on the head, neck, armpits and groin. If vomiting occurs stop drinks and place rower on left side.
- Heat Stroke:**
Heat Stroke is life threatening!
 Signs and symptoms: Symptoms may be similar to heat exhaustion. Very hot skin - whether moist or dry - indicates a true medical emergency.
- Rescue Actions:** Call 9-1-1. Remove excess clothing; cool the body by whatever means available, including cold, wet towels, ice-packs or immersion in cool water.

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SHOCK

Shock
Shock is a life-threatening condition that may be caused by an allergic reaction (anaphylactic shock), sudden immersion in cold water, excess heat, or trauma.

Anaphylactic Shock
Rower: If you have medication or a prescription epi-pen, use it. Keep calm.

Rescue Actions: Call 9-1-1. Try to remove stinger if caused by a bee. Treat for shock.

Traumatic Shock
 Signs and symptoms may include altered mental status; pale, cool, clammy skin; weak pulse; nausea, vomiting; rapid, irregular breathing; dilated pupils; bluish lips and nails.

Rescue Actions: Call 9-1-1. Transport to medical care as quickly as possible.

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UNCONSCIOUSNESS

Rescue Actions: If a rower appears to be unconscious quickly check for breathing, pulse, and major bleeding. If they don't respond to verbal commands -- "Are you OK?" -- check for responsiveness by pinching an earlobe.

Start CPR if there's no breathing or pulse

Fainting
Rescue Actions: Place the person on their back. Elevate legs slightly. Loosen tight clothes. Offer fruit juice once alert. Seek medical evaluation after any fainting episode.

Not Breathing
Rescue Actions: Place the person on their back. Check for breathing by watching for chest movement or placing your cheek next to the person's nose.

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TRAUMATIC INJURIES

Bleeding
Apply pressure directly to the wound. If bleeding continues add additional bandages and more pressure.

Do Not Remove Bandages Once Applied
If bleeding is pulsing apply a tourniquet 4 – 6 inches above the wound. Use a belt or strap, tightening it gradually until bleeding stops. Do Not Remove a Tourniquet

Cold compresses may be applied above a wound to slow bleeding and mitigate pain.


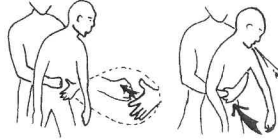
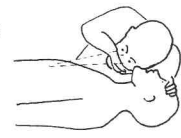

Concussions
 Signs and symptoms of concussions include confusion, unusual clumsiness, headaches, slurred speech, blurred vision, sensitivity to light, nausea, vomiting, and memory losses.

Symptoms may appear briefly and then disappear, or may not appear until hours, days, or even weeks after the injury. They should be medically evaluated.

Neck & Spinal Injuries
If a person suffers a blow to the head or spinal injury it is vital to stabilize the head, neck, and spine until medical help arrives.


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FIRST AID ABCs

- Airway -- Is the airway clear?**
 If someone is unconscious place them on their back and use the Head - Tilt/Chin - Lift 
 - For choking use the Heimlich Maneuver 
 - Breathing – is the person breathing?**
 - > Place your cheek near the person's nose
 - > Feel for breath with your cheek
 - > Look for the chest rising
 - > 12 - 18 breaths per minute
 - Circulation – Is there a pulse?**
 Check for pulse with two fingers at the neck just below the angle of the jawbone or at the wrist. 
- All rowers and coaches should take First Aid and CPR courses regularly. It is important to know what to do in emergencies.

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CPR - CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION

- > **100 compressions per minute**
 - > **Fast and deep compressions**
 - > **30 compressions > 2 rescue breaths**
 - > **DO NOT STOP!**
 - > **Continue until EMTs arrive**
- Start CPR immediately if someone is unconscious and has no pulse.
- Compressions should be fast and deep. CPR must be continued until EMTs or other medical help arrives. **Don't stop!**
- Use the heel of your hand(s) placed on and just below the chest bone. Keep elbows locked. 
- If rescue breaths can't be given continue compressions without rescue breaths. If a victim vomits turn them on their left side and clear the vomit.

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CALLING 9-1-1

Stay calm. Call 9 – 1 – 1 as soon as possible when a serious accident occurs.

Clearly state:

- > your location
- > the nature of the emergency
- > the 9-1-1 dispatcher will ask you what they need to know.

Be aware: EMTs can rarely respond to on-water accidents in less than 20 minutes.

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

Accidents happen to paddlers at all skill levels. You don't need to be at fault to be at risk. All paddlers should be good swimmers and wear life-jackets on cold water.

Cold-water accidents are life-threatening. Sudden immersion causes immediate shock and rapid muscle incapacitation. Paddlers have died in sight of their rescuers.

You should know First Aid, CPR, and overboard recovery, but this handbook is not a substitute for appropriate training and good judgment.

The first few minutes can be critical in an emergency. Your actions can make the difference between life and death.

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