

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

PREPAREDNESS

Medical emergencies in office buildings are relatively rare occurrences. Nonetheless, it is prudent to prepare for such an emergency. It is also important to note that there are legislative requirements for employers under WorksafeBC regulations.

This section sets out some basic information on medical emergencies and provides some practical recommendations. Links to additional sources of information are provided.

It is important to note that primarily responsibility for medical emergencies and preparedness is with each business in the building, and not with building management. We will support and be able to assist, however, business should not rely on building management to assume this function.

We make the following recommendations to businesses in the building.

1. [First Aid Attendant](#)

Appoint a First Aid Attendant among your staff. Typically, this person is a full time staff person who is on the premises during most office hours. The First Aid Attendant should have minimum Level 1 first aid training (see below).

WorksafeBC requires a First Aid Attendant for companies with a certain number of staff members (in an office environment, typically 11 or more persons). Please visit <http://www2.worksafebc.com/Publications/OHSRegulation/Part3.asp#SectionNumber:3.15> for more information.

2. [First Aid kit](#)

Purchase a First Aid kit that is appropriate for the number of persons in your organization. Ensure the First Aid kit is stored in a central location that is accessible (and visible) to all persons in your company. Check the First Aid Kit regularly and replenish supplies that have been used. Assign responsibility for checking and restocking the First Aid supplies to one person (i.e. the First Aid attendant). First Aid kits are available from various sources, including St. John Ambulance (www.sjca.ca).

3. [First Aid Training](#)

Encourage First Aid training among your staff. Excellent courses are provided through St. John Ambulance, see <http://www.sja.ca/BCYukon/Pages/default.aspx>. The Level 1 First Aid course is a 1 day course and cost approximately \$100.

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4. [Know your people](#)

Many people have a chronic medical condition or require regular medication. Knowing which members among your staff require particular care can help prevent medical emergencies and help you know how to respond if an emergency occurs. Please respect each person's right to privacy.

5. [Recognizing medical emergencies](#)

Know what signs to look for in people. The following are warning signs of a medical emergency:

- Bleeding that will not stop
- Breathing problems (difficulty breathing, shortness of breath)
- Change in mental status (unusual behavior, confusion)
- Chest pain
- Choking
- Coughing up or vomiting blood
- Fainting or loss of consciousness
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Sudden, severe pain anywhere in the body
- Sudden dizziness, weakness, or change in vision
- Upper abdominal pain or pressure

6. [Poison control centre](#)

Vancouver Emergency: (604) 682-5050

Vancouver Non-Emergency: (604) 682-2344

Post the above phone numbers and addresses in a visible location in your premises (i.e. on the notice board in the staffroom).

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WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

1. Remain calm. Take charge.
2. Call 9-1-1 (or direct someone else to call 9-1-1).

Provide concise information, including the nature of the emergency, the exact location (the building address is 900 West Hastings Street), the number of persons involved, the condition of the injured. Stay on the line until paramedics have arrived.

3. Attend to the person and administer first aid:
 - Start CPR or rescue breathing, if necessary and if you know the proper technique.
 - Place a semiconscious or unconscious person in the recovery position until the paramedics arrive.

If you are not trained in First Aid, direct someone to look for a person who has. Do not leave the injured person unattended.

4. Direct someone to call Building Management at 604-688-7900. We will assist as necessary. We will also reserve an elevator on the ground floor to provide faster access for the paramedics.

Direct someone to meet the paramedics at the main entrance to give directions to the injured person.

5. Keep others away to give the injured person privacy.