

TOOLBOX TALK #11

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES – PART 4 CHOKING AND OPIOID DRUG OVERDOSE

Every second counts when responding to emergency medical situations. Recognizing the signs and symptoms – and knowing how to properly respond until help arrives – is vital. Staying calm, being prepared and knowing what to do, including when to call 911, can help save a coworker's life.

Here are some common medical emergencies – and what bystanders should do. (In each situation listed, know that you should be ready to administer CPR at a moment's notice.



Choking

The most urgent signs of choking are the inability to cough, speak, or breathe. Someone who's choking may also clutch their throat, appear panicked, or have bluish lips or skin because of lack of oxygen. Breathing may become silent or high-pitched and attempts to cough may be weak or ineffective.

Call 911 in those cases or, better yet, have someone else do it so you can begin the Heimlich maneuver.

Opioid drug overdose

Symptoms of an opioid drug overdose include unresponsiveness, pinpoint pupils, and slow or shallow breathing. In severe cases, victim's lips and nail beds may turn bluish or ashen and seizures may occur

Be ready to administer naloxone (an opioid overdose reversal medication) and give CPR. All workplaces are encouraged to be ready to respond to an opioid overdose – including having naloxone in first aid kits.