



## MEDIA RELEASE

# Keep safe this spring with St John

**1 October 2009.** With temperatures rising and flowers starting to bloom, St John Ambulance Australia (NSW) is reminding people of a few of the most common spring safety tips, and encouraging even more people to learn first aid.

Robyn Galwey, General Manager of Training at St John (NSW), said the nicer weather will lead people to spend more time outdoors, increasing the chances of spring related injuries.

“Who doesn’t want to be outdoors when it is 30 degrees?”

“People need to make sure that if they are going to enjoy the weather outside, they should do it safely and that they know what to do if an injury occurs.

“Knowing first aid can make a significant difference to the safety of people and their families”, Ms Galwey said.

St John (NSW), who offers first aid courses in more than 25 locations throughout the state, is urging people to enrol into a course before summer.

As well as the tips below, the not-for-profit organisation also recommends having a suitable first aid kit close by.

### Unconscious casualty – DRABCD Plan

- Check for **Danger**, to yourself, others and casualty at the accident scene. This is the critical first step otherwise you could be the next casualty and unable to help others
- Check for a **Response** from the casualty — gently squeeze casualty’s shoulders and shout to see if the casualty is conscious
- Now, check the **Airway** — open mouth and look for foreign material. If foreign material present, turn casualty into the recovery position while supporting the neck and spine, remove any foreign objects. If no foreign material present, leave casualty on back
- Next, check **Breathing** — look, listen and feel for breathing:
  - + If breathing, place casualty in the recovery position, check for signs of life regularly and manage any injuries. Ring 000
  - + If not breathing, call 000 for an ambulance. Turn casualty onto their back and tilt the head back. Lift chin to open the airway, pinch the nose closed and breathe into the casualty’s mouth for about one second, watch chest rise and fall. Repeat sequence to give 2 initial breaths. Ensure the chest rises with each breath



# MEDIA RELEASE

- Then check for signs of life:  
+ If no signs of life: not breathing, not responding and not moving, commence cardiopulmonary resuscitation (**CPR**)
- If casualty shows signs of life, place in recovery position, assess and manage any bleeding and other injuries. Continue to monitor casualty's breathing, movement and consciousness until medical aid arrives
- Attach a **Defibrillator** (if available) – follow voice prompts

## Bee stings

- Remove stings by scraping sideways with your fingernail
- Apply a cold compress
- Watch for allergic reactions such as breathing difficulties, rashes, itching, or swelling around the mouth or eyelids
- If an allergic reaction takes place call 000 for an ambulance
- If casualty is carrying medication for the allergy it should be taken at once
- If conscious - help casualty to sit in a position which most relieves breathing difficulty
- If unconscious – follow DRABCD plan (see below)

## Snake & Spider bites

### *Snake/Funnel-Web/Mouse Spider*

1. Follow DRABCD
2. Lie casualty down
3. Calm Casualty
4. Apply a firm pressure immobilisation bandage starting just above fingers or toes and as far up limb as possible
5. Ensure the casualty does not move
6. Call 000 for an ambulance

### *Other tips*

- Do not wash venom off the skin as retained venom will assist identification
- Do not cut bitten area or try to suck venom out of wound
- Do not use a constrictive bandage or tourniquet
- Do not try to catch the snake

### *Preventing Snakebites*

- Make lots of noise when walking in the bush
- Always wear shoes outside
- Don't put your hands and feet where you can't see what's there
- Keep grass cut around your home



# MEDIA RELEASE

## *Red-back spider*

1. Follow DRABCD
2. Lie casualty down
3. Calm casualty
4. Apply cold pack/compress to area to lessen pain
5. Seek medical aid promptly.

## **Allergic Reaction (Anaphylaxis)**

Anaphylaxis occurs after exposure to an allergen (such as food, insect sting or medicine) to which a person is already extremely sensitive.

If the casualty is carrying an EpiPen for the allergy, it should be used at once. Where State or Territory legislation permits, administer the EpiPen according to the recommended Anaphylaxis Action Plan

1. Follow DRABCD
2. If the casualty is carrying an EpiPen® for the allergy, it should be used at once:
3. *Call 000 for an ambulance*
4. Keep casualty in lying or sitting position
5. Observe and record pulse and breathing
6. **If conscious** – help casualty to sit in position that assists breathing.  
**If unconscious**– check for signs of life and prepare to give CPR if necessary.

## **Asthma**

- If casualty is unconscious - follow DRABCD and call 000 for an ambulance
- If casualty is conscious - make casualty comfortable by helping them into a comfortable position – usually sitting upright and leaning forward
- Ensure adequate fresh air
- Tell casualty to take slow, deep breaths

### *Help with administration of casualty's medication:*

- Give 4 puffs of a blue reliever inhaler – casualty takes a breath with each puff
- Use a spacer if available - give 4 puffs, one at a time-casualty takes 4 breaths after each puff
- Wait 4 minutes
- If no improvement, give another 4 puffs
  
- If attack continues call 000 for an ambulance

### *For a severe attack, until ambulance arrives, keep giving:*

- Children – 4 puffs every 4 minutes

# MEDIA RELEASE



- Adults – 6-8 puffs every 5 minutes

For more information on St John (NSW) first aid courses, kits and products call 1300 360 455 or visit [www.stjohnnsw.com.au](http://www.stjohnnsw.com.au).

**ENDS**

**For further information please contact:**

Guilherme Feijo  
Marketing Partner, Community  
St John Ambulance Australia (NSW)  
T: 9219 6894 / M: 0410 220 872 / E: [guilherme\\_feijo@stjohnnsw.com.au](mailto:guilherme_feijo@stjohnnsw.com.au)