

When to Call 9-1-1

San Diego County's emergency access number for fire, police or medical emergencies is '9-1-1.'

At times you may not be sure whether it is appropriate to use this emergency number for medical problems. Here are some guidelines that may help you decide if this is a real medical emergency.

- A. Is the person (or you) having difficulty breathing?
 - Not breathing?
 - Labored breathing?
 - Choking?
 - Wheezing or suffering from an allergic reaction (hives, redness, facial swelling)?
 - Is this a drowning or near drowning?

- B. Is the person having chest pain or pressure? (Possible heart attack)

- C. Is the person having severe abdominal pain?

- D. Is the person unconscious?
 - Any fall or other type of injury?
 - An unexplained episode of unconsciousness?
 - A seizure (shaking of arms and legs accompanying the unconsciousness)?
 - Is the patient a diabetic?

- C. Is the person dizzy or lightheaded (Possible stroke)?
 - Can the person move his/her arms and legs equally?
 - Is the person having slurred speech or difficulty speaking or walking?
 - Is this person confused or disoriented?

- F. Is there uncontrolled bleeding?
 - "Pumping out" rapidly?
 - Bleeding slowly but continuously oozing?

- G. Is this possibly a poisoning or an overdose?
 - Did the person take too many pills or other type of medication (including Aspirin or Tylenol)?
 - If ingestion was unintentional, and person is awake and alert,
Call Poison Information 1-800-222-1222

- H. Does the person appear to have a fracture, or broken bone?

- I. Is the person having the worst headache of his/her life?

- J. **If there is any doubt in your mind, call 9-1-1.**

Be prepared to:

- Speak clearly and slowly
- Give the exact location
- Describe the situation
- Answer questions from the 9-1-1 operator
- Follow instructions from the 9-1-1 operator
- **DO NOT HANG UP** until told to do so