

## THE ABCs OF CPR

CPR is administered when someone's breathing or pulse (or both) stops. It is a procedure that is as simple as ABC: **A**irway, **B**reathing and **C**irculation.

### Assessment and Activation

If you find an adult who has collapsed, check responsiveness by gently shaking a shoulder and shouting, "Are you all right?"

If the person doesn't respond, shout for help.

If a helper is available, send that person to call 911.

If no help is available, make the call yourself.

### A. Airway

To open the airway, gently lift the chin with one hand while pushing down on the forehead with your other hand.

You want to tilt the head back.

Once the airway is open, lean over and put your ear close to the victim's mouth. **Look** at the chest for movement. **Listen** for the sound of breathing. **Feel** for breath on your cheek.

If none of these signs is present, the person isn't breathing.

If opening the airway doesn't cause the person to spontaneously start breathing, you'll have to provide rescue breathing.

If the victim is breathing, roll the person onto his or her side as a unit.

### B. Breathing

The best way to give rescue breathing is by using the mouth-to-mouth technique.

Using the thumb and forefinger of your hand that's on the victim's forehead, pinch the person's nose shut. Be sure to keep the heel of your hand in place so the person's head remains tilted.

Keep your other hand under the person's chin, lifting up.

As you keep an airtight seal with your mouth on the victim's mouth, immediately give two full breaths.

## **C. Circulation**

After giving two full breaths, find the person's carotid artery pulse to see if the heart is still beating. To find the carotid artery pulse, take your hand that's lifting the chin and find the person's Adam's apple (voice box). Slide the tips of your fingers down the groove beside the Adam's apple and feel for the pulse.

If you can't find the pulse, besides providing rescue breathing, you'll have to provide artificial circulation.

### **External Chest Compression**

External chest compressions provide artificial circulation. When you apply rhythmic pressure on the lower half of the victim's breastbone, you force the heart to pump blood.

To do external chest compression properly, kneel beside the victim's chest. With the middle and index fingers of your hand nearest the person's legs, find the notch where the bottom rims of the two halves of the rib cages meet in the middle of the chest. Now put the heel of one hand on the sternum (breastbone) next to the fingers that found the notch. Put your other hand on top of the hand that's in position. Be sure to keep your fingers up off the chest wall. It may be easier to do this if you interlock your fingers.

Bring your shoulders directly over the victim's sternum and press down, keeping your arms straight. If the victim is an adult, depress the sternum about 1-1/2 to 2 inches. Then completely relax the pressure on the sternum. Don't remove your hands from the victim's sternum, but do let the chest rise to its normal position between compressions. Relaxation and compression should take equal amounts of time.

If you must give both rescue breathing and external chest compressions, the proper rate is 15 chest compressions to 2 breaths. You must compress at a rate of 80 to 100 times per minute.

### **Neck Injury**

If you suspect that the victim may have a neck injury (such as might occur in a diving or automobile accident, for example), you must open the airway differently.

Open the airway using a chin-lift without tilting the head. If the airway stays blocked, tilt the head slowly and gently until the airway is open.

