

Dear Reader,

*The number of road crash deaths have increased by 31% from 2007 to 2017 and that of fatal road crashes have increased by 25.6% in the same period. Road crash fatalities increased by 3% in the last one year (from 1,46,133 in 2015 to 1,50,785 in 2016) and accident severity<sup>2</sup> increased from 29.1 in 2015 to 31.4 in 2016.*

But imaging is some of your near and dear ones was one of them.....isn't that thought itself fearful????



Here are few tips that could give the victim the Golden minute....your small help may help give the victim the **Golden Minutes**. Let's train ourselves to get into the habit of paying alert attention to a few things whenever you come across a Road Accident .....

★ **Check Yourself First:** Always remember "**Safety First**". If you have been injured in the accident, first check yourself for any injuries. Try to assess how well you can move your limbs, and if you experience symptoms such as dizziness etc. Remember you need to be fit enough to help the others.

★ **Then check the other person(s):** If other people are injured, first assess the extent of his/ her injuries. For e.g. is he bleeding from the head, neck, arms legs, abdomen back etc. Treat the quietest person first, they are usually more seriously injured or cannot breathe. People who can talk or scream, on the other hand, can breathe therefore can be treated a little later. Ask for the patient's name, if he responds, it means he is able to understand the situation and has most likely not suffered a severe head injury.

★ **Call for help:** Immediately call for an ambulance or rush the person to a hospital.

★ **Avoid feeding the person:** Do not give the person any water, food or other fluids through the mouth, it could lead to the patient choking.

★ **Look for signs of breathing:** Next, check if the person is breathing and if he has a pulse.

★ **Check for obstructions in the person's mouth and throat:** If you do not hear any breath sounds, check his/her mouth for any obstructions. If there is something obstructing the airway, use your index and middle finger to clear the airway.

★ **Perform life saving techniques:** If there is no pulse, start CPR or EAR. Keep the person's neck straight to start EAR (External Air Resuscitation) or CPR (Cardio pulmonary resuscitation). There are 3 types of EAR; Mouth-to-mouth, Mouth-to-Nose, Mouth-to-Mask. **Contact your First Aid Trainer for more details/ demonstration.**

★ **Ways to help him/her in grave situations:** If there is bleeding from the mouth or the patient is vomiting, turn the person to his/her side. This will avoid any chances of the person choking. Place the person's arm that is under him straight out and the arm closest to you across his chest.

★ **Deal with open wounds:** If there are extensive wounds, try to control the bleeding using pressure to the area using a cloth. Press down with your palms rather than your fingertips.

★ **Always suspect spinal injuries:** If the person's neck is in an awkward position (not normally placed) or the person is unconscious, do not move the patient. Get help immediately. This could mean that the person's neck is broken and moving him/her in such a situation can cause more harm than good.

★ **Keep the person warm:** Usually accident victims feel excessively cold due to shock. Therefore keeping them warm is essential to survival. You can use whatever you have to do this, such as a T-shirt, jacket, etc.

★ **Tips to remember while shifting a person to the hospital:**

- ✓ The patient should be transported on a stretcher or a stiff board. This is important as reducing the amount of movement the person experiences is essential to avoid his/her injuries from becoming worse.
- ✓ Keep the person's neck and back straight. You could place a rolled up towel or thick cloth under the neck for better support.
- ✓ Ensure that the person is lying down flat.
- ✓ If there is only a limb injury, the patient can be transported in a sitting position.
- ✓ In case of a bleeding injury, lift the injured part above the person's body level and apply pressure on the region. Keep applying pressure till you reach the hospital. This helps control and eventually stop the bleeding.
- ✓ Make sure the person has a pulse and is breathing on the way to the hospital. If he/she stops breathing, be prepared to start CPR or EAR in the vehicle.

★ **Laws regarding Road traffic accidents:** According to a Supreme Court Judgement, an accident victim is entitled to immediate emergency medical care. A doctor is duty bound to provide primary care to the patient and informing the police is the hospital's responsibility. In the case of an accident the police will be called by the hospital, while they file an MLC (medicolegal cases). If the hospital is not equipped to handle the patient's injuries, it is the hospital's responsibility to stabilize the patient and provide an ambulance to be transferred to another better equipped hospital. The hospital also has no right to delay first aid or life saving measures on the basis of procedural delays for reasons such as absence of a relative to sign forms etc. According to the law, this is again a punishable offence.

★ **Duty of the driver involved in the accident:** It is mandated by the Supreme court order under the Motor vehicles act 1988 (sec 134), that the primary duty of the driver of the

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vehicle involved in the accident is to take the injured to the hospital. The only exception to this rule is that if the driver of the vehicle himself is grievously injured.

*Your small efforts could save someone's life...kindly think before your becoming an onlooker.*

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