

How to Treat a

SPINAL INJURY*



Do a primary survey first!

Make sure the scene is hazard-free before entering.

If it is safe, check the casualty's airway, breathing and circulation.

SYMPTOMS

Damaged vertebrae:

- Back pain.
- Strangely-shaped spine.
- Bruising around the spine.



Spinal cord damage:

- Loss of control over limbs, bladder or bowels.
- Loss of sensation.
- Breathing difficulties.

TREATMENT

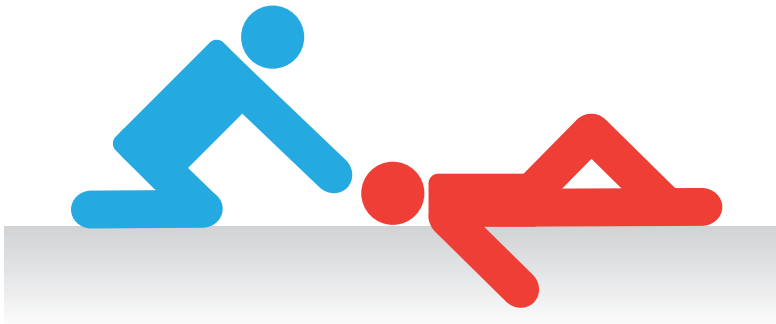
1

Call 9-1-1 as soon as possible.



2

Support casualty to prevent movement of neck or back.



3

If vomiting, turn casualty to the side.

4



If the casualty is awake:

- Remind him/her not to move.
- Kneel behind the casualty and support his/her head.
- Continue until either EMS arrives or the casualty goes into cardiac arrest.



If the casualty is unconscious:

- Open their airway using the **jaw-thrust technique**. Put your fingertips at the angles of the jaw and gently lift to open the airway, avoiding tilting the neck.
- If the casualty is breathing, stabilize his/her head while maintaining an open airway to monitor breathing. Continue until EMS arrives or until cardiac arrest occurs.
- If the casualty is not breathing, perform CPR until EMS arrives or the casualty regains consciousness.



For more information about first aid, visit sja.ca