

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

The Emergency Medical Service (EMS) System in Contra Costa represents the combined efforts of the public and private providers of emergency medical care, and the county and city governments. In addition to the components listed below, the EMS system has plans that are regularly updated and tested for handling multiple or mass casualty incidents which would result from a major accident or disaster.

Components of the EMS System include:

**9-1-1** is the phone number to call to report any emergency requiring immediate police, fire, or medical assistance. Carefully answer all questions the dispatcher asks you, so that the correct response can be dispatched to your emergency.

**FIREFIGHTERS** are first responders on most **9-1-1** calls. Firefighters are trained to provide immediate medical assistance. All firefighters in Contra Costa are trained and equipped to use cardiac defibrillators on heart attack victims. Some firefighters are trained as paramedics to provide advanced life support prior to the arrival of the ambulance.

**AMBULANCES** staffed by paramedics are dispatched to all **9-1-1** medical emergencies where advanced life support treatment skills may be needed. Paramedics operate under county treatment guidelines and may consult with a base hospital for further medical direction.

**BASE HOSPITALS** provide medical consultation by radio or telephone to the ambulance and firefighter paramedics in the field.

**RECEIVING HOSPITALS** are licensed by the state to provide emergency services. Receiving hospitals have a physician on

duty in the emergency department and are staffed and equipped to provide emergency services 24 hours a day.

**TRAUMA CENTER** is a county-designated hospital that provides specialized care for major trauma victims.

**MEDICAL HELICOPTERS** are staffed with Advanced Life Support personnel and are used for rapid transport to hospitals.

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE COMMITTEE** advises the County Board of Supervisors and the EMS Agency on emergency medical services.

**CONTRA COSTA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY** provides overall coordination, planning, and evaluation of the EMS System. The EMS Agency is a part of Contra Costa Health Services.

Comments, questions or complaints about emergency medical care may be directed to the County EMS Agency, (925) 646-4690.

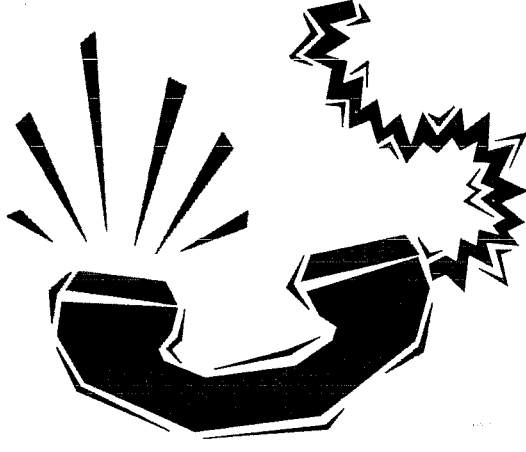
AS A REMINDER OF YOUR  
EMERGENCY NUMBER, PLEASE PLACE THIS  
STICKER ON YOUR PHONE



Compliments of:  
**Contra Costa Health Services**  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY  
(925) 646-4690

**make  
the right  
EMS call**  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

# PHONE FIRST!



IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY USE  
THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES SYSTEM

EMERGENCY  
**9-1-1**  
DIAL FIRE POLICE MEDICAL

## WHY “PHONE FIRST”?

“Phone First” puts the rescuers into action as quickly as possible. In many cases the key to survival is the rapid response of emergency personnel.

### WHEN TO CALL 9-1-1 FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Call 9-1-1 for a serious emergency such as:

- Difficulty breathing
- Choking
- Severe uncontrolled bleeding
- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures or convulsions
- Signs of heart attack
  - Severe squeezing chest pains or extreme discomfort that radiates from the chest into either the arm, neck or jaw. Often accompanied by extreme sweating, weakness, nausea or vomiting.
- Suspected drug overdose
- Poisoning
- Traumatic injuries
- Serious burns.

**Please keep in mind that 9-1-1 is available to treat and transport serious emergencies.**

For minor medical emergencies, contact your physician or health plan for advice, and consider non-emergency transportation.

## WHO TO CALL

From any telephone in California dial 9-1-1 for reporting a police, fire or medical emergency.

**When calling from a pay phone, 9-1-1 calls are FREE.**

### WHAT DO YOU SAY?

**First:** State calmly “This is a medical emergency”.

**Where:** Give exact location of the victim (address, city, and nearest cross street).

**What:** Tell the dispatcher what is wrong with the victim (chest pain, bad fall, passed out, etc.).

**DON'T HANG UP!** Stay on the line and follow any instructions that you are given.

### WHAT TO DO UNTIL HELP ARRIVES

- **DO NOT MOVE THE VICTIM** unless there is danger from fire or other hazards.
- Turn on porch light and be sure your address is visible.
- Do CPR/rescue breathing as needed/directed.
- Stay with the victim and give first aid to the best of your ability.
- Keep the victim warm.
- Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink.
- Watch for or have others watch for emergency vehicles, and direct the rescue personnel to the victim.

- Gather all medications taken regularly.
- Put away the family dog.
- If possible, write down the phone number of the victim’s physician.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO IN ADVANCE TO BE PREPARED FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY?

A patient’s chance to survive is dependent on a strong EMS system. You are the first link in this system and your being prepared may make the difference when seconds count. Some steps you can take to be prepared are:

- Place the 9-1-1 sticker attached to this pamphlet on your telephone.
- Be sure that your address is visible from the street.
- Post your own address and telephone number over the telephone. Baby-sitters and visitors may not know your address and you may need a reminder yourself in a crisis.
- Orient family members and others (baby-sitters, etc.) to the procedure for using 9-1-1.
- Be familiar with the First Aid and Survival Guide in your telephone book.
- Learn CPR – To obtain class location call

**1-800-GIVE-CPR**

