



In partnership with Sir Brian Bell Foundation

# FIRST AID IN THE PACIFIC

## WHAT IS FIRST AID?

First aid is the help given to someone who is injured or ill to keep them safe and to cause no further harm. The role of a first aider is to give someone this help.

## THE FIRST AIMS OF FIRST AID ARE:

- Preserve life
- Prevent illness or injury from becoming worse
- Relieve pain, if possible
- Promote recovery
- Protect the unconscious

All information provided is from St John Ambulance in partnership with Sir Brian Bell Foundation Papua New Guinea

# SPINAL INJURIES

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Pain along the spinal vertebrae
- Loss of movement or impaired movement below site of injury
- Loss of sensation, tingling in hands or feet
- Difficulty breathing
- Tenderness, swelling or bruising
- History of fall from height, motor vehicle accident or diving into shallow water

A spinal injury occurs when the spinal cord is severed and the spinal cord below the site of injury is no longer able to receive messages from the brain.

When the spinal cord is damaged, the body below the injury site is unable to move or feel sensation. Depending on severity it could be in sections or all of the lower regions.

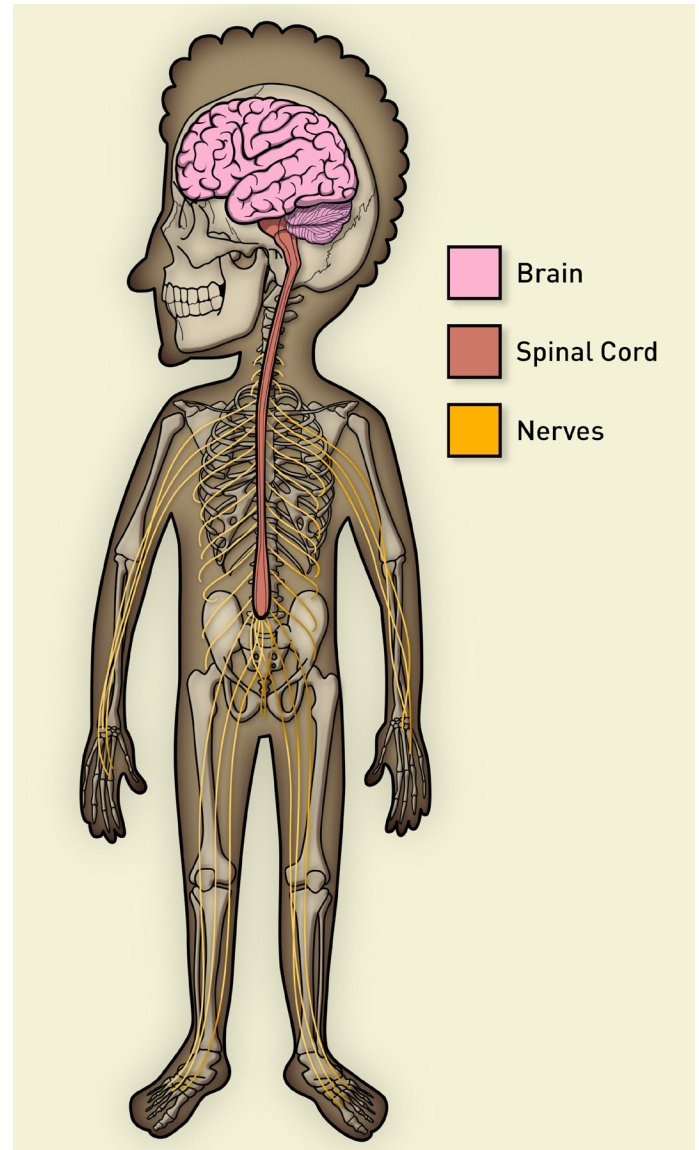
## WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

### Unconscious patient management:

- 1. DRSABC**  
(*Danger - Response - Send for help - Airway - Breathing - CPR*)
2. Place in recovery position by holding the head and neck steady while carefully rolling over. This will take at least two people.
3. Maintain a clear and open airway.
4. Hold the head and neck in neutral position.

### Conscious patient management:

1. Reassure patient.
2. Do not move the patient and keep the head and neck aligned at all times.
3. Prevent twisting and bending.
4. Ensure ambulance has been called.



## IMPORTANT NOTE:

**Quick immobilisation is the highest priority.**

**Airway and breathing takes precedence.**

**Take extreme care at all times to keep the patient's head and neck aligned.**

**Always suspect a spinal injury in an unconscious or intoxicated person.**



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