Medical Emergencies on Campus at UW-River Falls

If it is Potentially Life Threatening or if You're in Doubt, call 911 (once you have secured an outside line)

Fall 2012

This is just a reminder that if you observe a medical emergency on campus, you should call 911 (once you have secured an outside line), even if the victim requests that you not do this. River Falls Emergency Medical Services (Ambulance) only charges if the person is assessed, treated, or transported. A person may refuse any services or transport once the ambulance arrives. You can contact University Police (715/425-3133) to call 911 for you, but staff in University Police and Student Health Services do not have the training and equipment to respond to and treat persons with medical emergencies. It is vital to get trained individuals and appropriate equipment to the scene to assist the victim as soon as possible.

When calling 911, you will be asked questions, such as what kind of injury or illness you are reporting, who you are and who the victim is, where you and the victim are located, when the incident happened or if it is still in progress, a number where you can be reached, etc.

Examples of when 911 should be called (not exhaustive):

- For any health condition that is life threatening or could become life threatening
- Severe intoxication/alcohol poisoning (passing out; semi-conscious; unable to wake up; mental confusion; vomiting while passed out/asleep; slow or irregular breathing; or cold, clammy, pale, or bluish skin, etc.)
- Loss of consciousness or change in mental status, such as confusion, difficulty arousing, or slurred speech
- Chest pain lasting 2 minutes or longer
- Shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or choking
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Suspected head or spinal injury (don't move the person)
- Chronic illness with symptoms
- Sudden or severe pain
- Coughing or vomiting blood
- Sudden weakness, dizziness, or change in vision
- Severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Suspected broken bones (besides a finger or toe) or compound fracture (bone exposed through skin)
- Serious burns
- Injury resulting from trauma
- Abnormally low body temperature (hypothermia) or heat stress or exhaustion
- Injury from motor vehicle or industrial accident
- Drug overdose or poisoning

Calling 911 immediately connects you and the victim with persons specifically trained in handling medical emergencies. By transporting the victim yourself to a hospital or clinic, you may be putting yourself and the victim at greater risk because treatment will be delayed, because moving the victim may worsen the condition, and because you will most likely not have the needed equipment or skills if the victim's condition worsens while in transit.

Our hope is to keep those on our campus safe and healthy. As a reminder, certain basic health services are covered at the River Falls Medical Clinic (715/425-6701) and Pierce County Reproductive Health Services (715/425-8003) by Student Health Services for current students, and taxi rides (715/425-7878) to and from both locations are also covered. You may refer students to these locations for non-emergency related health concerns. If you have questions, please contact Alice Reilly-Myklebust, Director of Student Health and Counseling Services, at 715/425-3293 or Dick Trende, Director of University Police, at 715/425-3133.