

# The Flying Doctor guide to staying and playing safe in the Australian Outback.



The Australian Outback offers spectacular scenery and the chance for great adventure. But it's **important to be ready** for the rigours of travelling in isolated areas.

So next time you're planning to hit the great outdoors, **bear the following in mind** – and make sure you never have to see the inside of a Flying Doctor aircraft.

## Pack smart

Always pack for the worst. Here are some essential items **you should never** leave home without:

- > A set of good quality maps.
- > A lot of water.
- > Enough food for each person for two days.
- > Matches or firelighter.
- > Fire extinguisher.
- > A HF (High Frequency) radio compatible with the Flying Doctor. Remember, CBs and mobile phones will not work in remote areas.
- > Pack a first aid kit – and consider doing a first aid training course before setting off.
- > A hat, sunscreen and insect repellent.
- > Any medications and prescriptions you need.
- > Suitable clothes for the climate, including good quality walking shoes and warmer clothes for the evenings.

## If the worst should happen...

No matter how well prepared you are, things can and do go wrong. If you should find yourself in difficulty, there are a few **key things to remember**:

- > If your car breaks down or you become lost, stay with your vehicle. Use it for shade and shelter and remember it is easier to locate a missing vehicle than a missing person in the vast Outback.
- > If you become lost while out walking, stop and study your maps. If you can determine where you came from, go back. If you can't, head to higher ground.
- > Distribute food and water sparingly.
- > If you hear rescuers, signal with three torch flashes and with your whistle.
- > Light a small smoky fire with green leaves during the day and a small bright fire with dry materials at night.
- > Be prepared to wait.

## A wise word about water

One of the most common mistakes people make is underestimating the amount of water you will need. However, calculating how much to take really isn't that hard.

For every hour you spend in the Outback, you should allow for a minimum of one litre of water per person. If active, you will need to consume additional water at regular intervals.

Be sure to carry your water in small containers instead of one tank to minimise the potentially lethal danger of leaks.

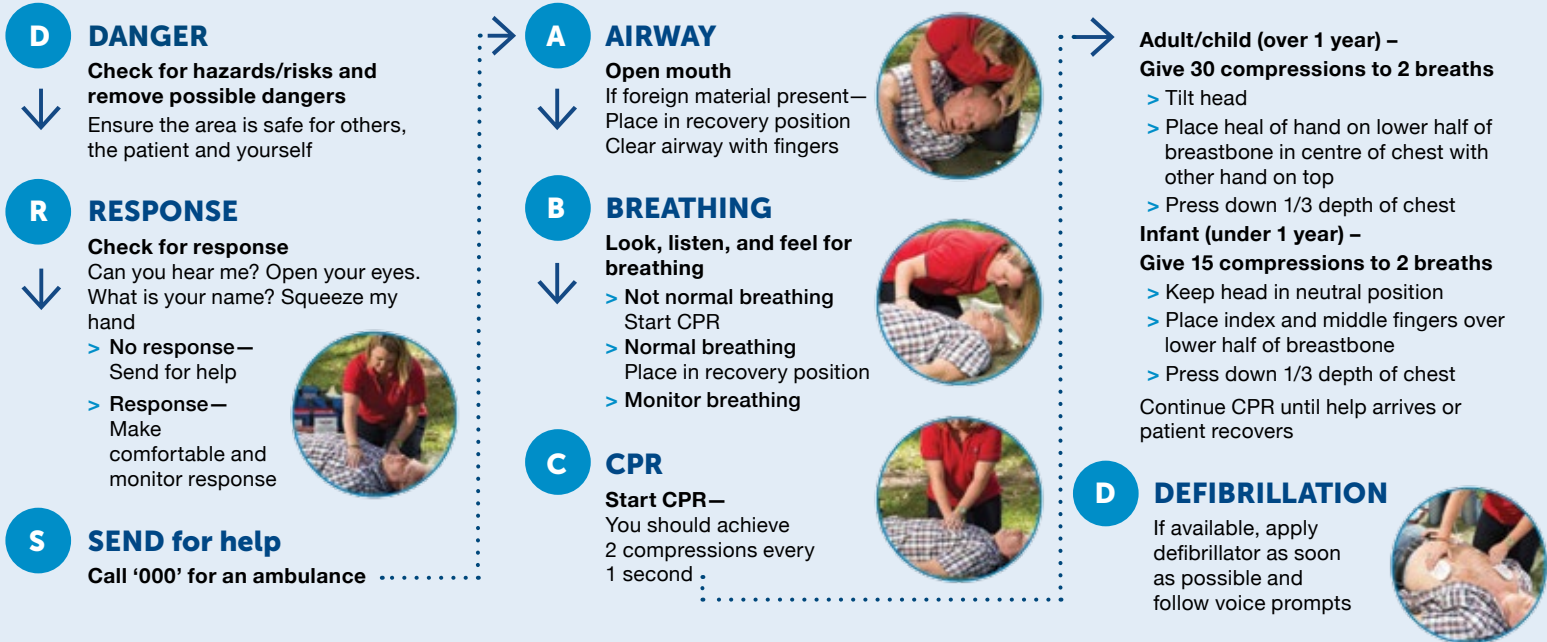


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## Resuscitation Action Plan (DRSABCD)

This Action Plan is a vital aid to the first aider in assessing whether the casualty has any life threatening conditions and if any immediate first aid is necessary. It is always important to **call triple zero (000)** for an ambulance as soon as possible.



In an emergency call **triple zero (000)** for medical aid.

### Bleeding

- Remove or cut patient's clothing to expose wound
- Apply direct, sustained pressure over wound using sterile pad
  - If there is an embedded object, use indirect pressure & **do not remove the object**
- Where possible, elevate injured part above heart
- Bandage dressing and pad firmly in place
  - If bleeding continues, apply another pad and bandage over first dressing
  - If bleeding persists seek medical aid

- Splint the limb on either side of the bite to immobilise
- Seek medical aid

### Burns

- Remove patient to a safe environment  
**If clothing on fire**
  - STOP, DROP, COVER AND ROLL
  - Smother flames with a non-flammable blanket
  - Roll patient along ground until flames extinguish
  - Assess airway and breathing
- Cool the burnt area
  - Hold burnt area under cold running water for 20 minutes
  - Remove clothing and jewellery from burnt area unless sticking to burn
  - Place sterile, lint-free dressing over burn e.g. plastic cling film
  - Where possible, elevate burnt limbs to minimise swelling
- Seek medical aid

### Signs of a heart attack

If warning signs are severe, get worse, or have lasted for 10 minutes call '000' immediately. A patient may experience one or more of the following:

- Pain, pressure, heaviness, tightness in one or more of the chest, jaw, neck, back, shoulders, arm/s
  - Shortness of breath
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Feeling dizzy or light-headed
  - Cold sweats
- Encourage patient to immediately stop what they are doing
  - Rest patient in comfortable position
  - Seek medical help

### Snake Bite

- Rest, reassure, and observe victim
- Commence resuscitation if necessary
- Apply pressure immobilisation technique
  - Apply a broad pressure bandage over the bite, firm and tight
  - Starting at the fingers or toes of the bitten limb, apply another pressure bandage extending upward covering as much of the limb as possible

