Positive Choices
Drug and Alcohol Information
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Factsheet

How to put someone in the recovery position



Evidence ratings:

This resource has undergone expert review. See our Help/Q&A section for more details.

Year: Year 5–6, Year 7–8, Year 9–10, Year 11–12

Targeted Drugs: Alcohol, Drugs (General)

Tags: recovery position, first aid, emergency

Links to National Curriculum:
ACPPS072 (Yr 7–8), ACPPS091 (Yr 9–10)

Origin: Australian

Cost:
Free

Putting someone in the recovery position

If a person is unconscious, or non-responsive but breathing, they should be placed in the recovery position while waiting for help to arrive(see How to help someone who has taken a drug). If they are left lying on their back they could suffocate on their vomit or their tongue could block their airway. Putting someone in the recovery position will help to keep the airways open.

To place someone in the recovery position:

1. Kneel beside the person.

2. Straighten their arms and legs.



3. Fold the arm closest to you over their chest.



4. Place the other arm at a right angle to their body.



5. Get the leg closest to you and bend the knee.



6. While supporting the person's head and neck, gently take the bent knee closest to you and very gently roll the person away from you.
Adjust the upper leg, so both the hip and knee are bent at right angles. Ensure the person is steady and cannot roll.



7. Tilt the head back and make sure the airways are clear and open.



Find out more about how to help someone who has taken an illegal drug.

Evidence Base

This factsheet was developed following expert review by researchers at the Matilda Centre for Research in Mental Health and Substance Use at the University of Sydney, the National Drug & Alcohol Research Centre at the University of New South Wales, and the National Drug Research Institute at Curtin University. SeeTeacher Booklet, Parent Booklet or Student Booklet for more information.

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