

COLLAPSE (Syncope)

PATIENT & CARER INFORMATION LEAFLET

Please take the time to read this leaflet and keep it in a safe place



SYNCOPE is a collapse where there is a brief loss of consciousness and a return to normal without any medical assistance.

The collapse is caused by not enough oxygen reaching the brain. It is your body's way of getting you to lie down, so that oxygen-carrying blood can quickly get back to your brain.

CAUSES OF A COLLAPSE

A collapse can be caused by a number of things. It can be something as simple and common as:

- Standing for too long
- Low blood pressure or blood pressure medication
- Anaemia
- Dehydration
- Menstruation, or
- Pregnancy

Some collapses may be due to something more serious. It is important that your GP is made aware of this episode as they may wish to rule out a more serious cause through further tests. This is particularly important if you have a family history of heart or brain abnormalities.

SIGNS OF A COLLAPSE

Just before you collapse, you may experience the following symptoms:

- Yawning
- A cold sweat
- A feeling of sickness/nausea
- Fast, deep breathing
- Confusion
- Blurred vision or spots in front of the eyes
- Ringing in the ears.

SOME TIPS ON PREVENTING A COLLAPSE

- Get up from lying or sitting slowly and gradually
- If you feel faint lie down if possible or sit with your head between your knees
- Eat and drink regularly
- Avoid hot, stuffy environments

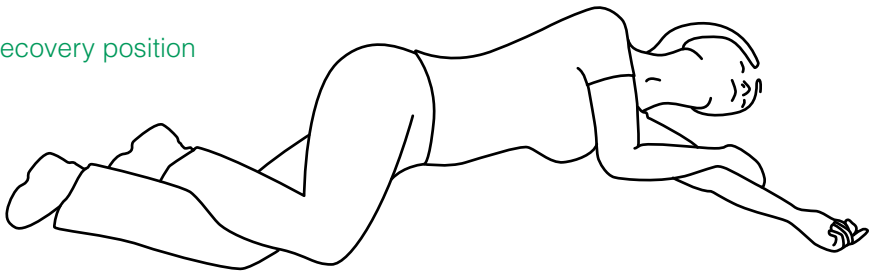
TREATMENT

- Lie down preferably with your head down and legs raised
- If this is not possible sit down with your head between your legs.

IMPORTANT

If following a collapse someone does not regain consciousness in one minute, someone will need to dial **999** and ask for an ambulance.

recovery position



- Lie them on their side with their chin up slightly
- Do not give anything by mouth.

If you have symptoms of chest pain and/or shortness of breath associated with your collapse it is important to phone **999** and seek medical advice.

WHO TO CONTACT

If your condition gets worse in any way, especially if you collapse more frequently or are increasingly worried, contact one of the following...

999

In an emergency dial 999 or 112 and ask the operator for an ambulance response. Always call an ambulance if you think your illness or injury is life threatening. If you are at all unsure, call 999.

Your Doctor

During normal surgery hours contact your doctor.

NHS24

When your GP practice is closed and you can't wait until it opens call NHS24 on 08454 24 24 24.

When you need reliable information about illnesses and conditions, NHS Services and current health issues call 0800 22 44 88 or visit www.NHS24.com

YOUR VIEWS ARE IMPORTANT TO US

Let us know how we can improve the service. We need you to tell us about your experiences, good or bad, and how you would like to see our services improved.

Have an opinion or suggestion? Let us know...

Tel: 0131 4467000

Fax: 0131 4467001

Email: scotamb.corporateaffairs@nhs.net

Write to: Scottish Ambulance Service, Corporate Affairs Manager,
Tipperlinn Road, Edinburgh EH10 5UU

This leaflet can be made available in other languages and formats on request. On occasions a summary will be provided. Please contact the corporate affairs team via email or the telephone number above who will then deal with your request.

To download a copy of this leaflet visit:
www.scottishambulance.com

DATE OF PUBLICATION: MARCH 2009
REFERENCE: SASSYN
NEXT REVISION: MARCH 2010