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## ACCESSING SAFETY KNOWLEDGE (ASK) SHEET: *First Aid: On Site vs Clinic Treatment*

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First aid requirements will vary from one workplace to the next, depending on the nature of the work, the type of hazards, the workplace size and location, as well as the number of people at the workplace. These factors must be taken into account when deciding what first aid arrangements need to be provided. The distance of the workplace from ambulance services, hospital and medical centers should be taken into account when determining your first aid requirements. For example, if life-threatening injuries or illnesses could occur and timely access to emergency services cannot be assured, a person trained in more advanced first aid techniques (such as the provision of oxygen) will be needed.

OSHA Defines "First Aid" as:



- Using a nonprescription medication at nonprescription strength;
- Administering tetanus immunizations;
- Cleaning, flushing or soaking wounds on the surface of the skin;
- Using wound coverings such as bandages, Band-Aids™, gauze pads, etc.; or using butterfly bandages or Steri-Strips™;
- Using hot or cold therapy;
- Using any non-rigid means of support, such as elastic bandages, wraps, non-rigid back belts, etc.;
- Using temporary immobilization devices while transporting an accident victim;
- Drilling of a fingernail or toenail to relieve pressure, or draining fluid from a blister;
- Using eye patches;
- Removing foreign bodies from the eye using only irrigation or a cotton swab;
- Removing splinters or foreign material from areas other than the eye by irrigation, tweezers, cotton swabs or other simple means;
- Using finger guards;
- Using massages;
- Drinking fluids for relief of heat stress.

This is a complete list of "First Aid" Procedures/Treatments considered for 1904 purposes. All other medical treatments should be performed by a Trained First Aid Provider (Medic First Aid, Red Cross, etc.), Licensed Medical Professional or Medical Clinic/Facility depending on the specific injury and level of training of the Provider.

On occasion, an employee may refuse medical treatment for various reasons. OSHA has often proposed to add additional language to the existing employee and illness recordkeeping rule (29 CFR 1904) that all covered employers must accurately record all employee injuries and illnesses for up to five years after an incident. OSHA further states that employers who discover previously unknown employee injuries or illness within five years of any incident would be required to revise their OSHA records to include this information or face possible OSHA enforcement for recordkeeping violations (OSHA, 2015). OSHA also holds employers responsible for recording occupational illnesses and injuries where employees were offered medical treatment above first aid, but the employee clearly and voluntarily refused the medical treatment (OSHA, Standard Interpretations, 2007).

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