



Cassowary Coast Get Ready Resilience Toolkit

Staying Well & Healthy Medical Resilience Information

IMPORTANT NOTE: Your confidential records contain personal information that identifies you. Keep all information and documentation in a secure place. Do not use the USB which contains this information for any other use. If lost or used for any other purpose, your identity could be stolen.

Staying Well & Healthy Medical Resilience Information

Health & Medical Resilience

Get Ready Health & Meds Kit

Healthcare starts when you are healthy. This health and medical information provides some pointers for staying well. It also suggests ways to help you navigate the health care system when you're not well, to ensure you receive the most appropriate services to meet your needs.

It is essential to be aware of the health care services available to you and this information is designed to help identify when it's essential to seek immediate emergency assistance and some tips on how to simplify your interactions with the health care system. Being able to engage with your doctors and allied medical practitioners to feel confident in being able to raise the issues important to you is vital to ensuring you receive the best available treatment and advice.

Content Note: This section was prepared by Ms Alanna Sue Tin and should be used as information purposes only and does not replace the need for accurate and personal medical advice.

When to call an Ambulance?

In an emergency if you require urgent transport to an Emergency Department, phone 000 and ask for the Ambulance Service. Phone **112** from mobile phones if **000** does not work. Non emergency assistance can be obtained by phoning **13 12 33**, but if you are uncertain the 000 operator will be able to direct your call. Non-emergency ambulance transfers usually require 24 hours notice.

Patients arriving by ambulance receive rapid assessment and the paramedics are able to provide initial care, so if the patient's condition is rapidly deteriorating it is vital that you contact the Ambulance service.

When you phone the emergency services operator, stay calm and answer their questions as clearly as you can. They will want to know:

- The exact **address** of where the ambulance is required
- A contact **phone number**
- Details of **what happened** and the **number of people involved**
- Name, age, and gender** of the unwell person
- Condition** of the unwell person – are they **conscious** and **breathing**?

The operator may stay on the line to monitor the patient's condition until the paramedics arrive and will instruct you on anything you can do to help.

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Please be aware that Ambulances will only transport you to the Emergency Room- you will require your own transport home if you are not admitted to hospital. It is best to contact a friend or family member to let them know you need assistance, or organise a taxi.

If you are able to get to the Emergency Room without an Ambulance, proceed to the Reception desk and calmly describe your problem to the triage nurses. No patient will be turned away without being examined, but patients will be seen on a 'sickest person first' basis, so consider whether the Emergency Department is the most efficient way for your condition to be managed.

Unsure about when call an Ambulance?

If you are uncertain whether your condition counts as an Emergency, contact **13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)** for advice.

Any life-threatening situation is considered an emergency. These include:

- ∞ major accidents
- ∞ sudden onset of illness (e.g. headache)
- ∞ sudden onset of pain (e.g. chest pain, abdominal pain, labour pain)
- ∞ sudden worsening in the severity of pain
- ∞ altered sensations and numbness or weakness
- ∞ incidents with severe loss of blood

- ∞ if patient describes major discomfort and the severity of the illness is unknown
- ∞ significant fevers, vomiting, or diarrhoea, especially in a young child or elderly person

Non-life threatening emergencies can include conditions such as fractures, or situations in which the bleeding is controlled, but these still may require an ambulance to transfer the patient to hospital.

Red Flags

There are some situations in which it is vital that medical assistance is sought without delay.

Heart Attacks

- pain in the centre of the chest, that may radiate to the arms, shoulders, neck and jaw
- sudden collapse may be the only feature
- You can assist by phoning 000
- If the patient is conscious, place them on the floor but sitting up to assist with breathing
- Assist to take any prescribed chest pain medication known as glyceryl trinitrate
- If the patient is unconscious, check their airways and breathing and commence CPR if they are not breathing.

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Stroke

- Features of a stroke can be remembered by the acronym FAST
 - **F** Facial droop – has their mouth begun to droop?
 - **A** Arm Weakness – can they lift both arms?
 - **S** Speech – is their speech slurred? Can they understand you?
 - **T** Time is critical – call 000 now if any of the above features are present
 - Other signs include blurred vision, a sudden severe headache of no known cause, and any altered levels of consciousness
 - Even if the patient recovers quickly from the symptoms, it is still important to seek immediate help as these symptoms can be warning signs of an imminent stroke
- If the patient is conscious, keep their head and shoulders raised and supported
 - loosen any tight clothing and keep at a comfortable temperature
 - make sure their airway is clear and open
 - do not give anything to eat or drink

Illicit Drug Overdose/Poisoning

- If a patient has collapsed from the use of illicit drugs, it is essential that 000 is called immediately
- Be honest with the emergency services operator about what the patient has taken
- Paramedics are bound under confidentiality laws not to disclose information that would identify a person who has received ambulance treatment
- The Queensland Ambulance Service will only notify the Police if
 - the physical safety of paramedics or others are at risk
 - a death has occurred at the scene
 - a violent injury is involved (e.g. stabbing, or shooting)

Meningococcal Meningitis

- the combination of high fevers, severe headache and neck stiffness in a child or adult requires urgent medical attention
- the patient may also have vomiting, drowsiness and a 'bruise-like' rash in a child or infant, the features may be less clear, though they may be more irritable or drowsy and have increased difficulty feeding

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The role of a Hospital Emergency Department

Queensland's Emergency Departments are designed to treat people with acute and urgent medical problems. They are open 24 hours a day in most public hospitals (and some private hospitals) and are staffed by doctors and nurses trained to help with emergencies. Treatment is free at public hospitals to current Medicare card holders and people from countries with Reciprocal Health Agreements with Australia.

You do not require an appointment to go to an Emergency Department, and if you are seriously ill and need immediate treatment you will be a priority. Conversely, if your medical condition is not urgent you may face a considerable delay in seeing a doctor as patients are treated based on the urgency of their medical conditions i.e. the more serious your condition, the sooner you will be treated.

Many Emergency Departments are swamped by patients with non urgent conditions, and these tie up resources that could be used on patients with serious concerns. Many non-urgent conditions are better handled by your local GP. Emergency doctors deal only with acute matters and will not prescribe medications that are required for chronic conditions (e.g. chronic pain medication).

It is much preferred that you consult your GP for on-going conditions, as they are in a better position to follow you up to make sure that your treatment is effective. GPs are also the best people to coordinate your care when you require treatment by multiple specialists, and your Emergency Department doctors will refer you back to your GP if they feel that they are better situated for managing your treatment.

If you are uncertain whether you should go to the Emergency Department or wait to see your GP, you can phone 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) at any time for advice on your situation.

What to bring to the Emergency Room?

If your condition is stable enough to gather supplies, it may be helpful to take the following with you to the Emergency Room.

- your Medicare card, pension or concession card
- a list of current medications
- any relevant X rays, scans, or other test results
- the contact details of your GP
- money
- mobile phone
- book or magazine
- toys and extra clothing for babies and small children

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Basic First Aid Tips

As emergencies can happen to anyone at any time, the best possible preparation is to complete a first aid course which will allow you to learn the appropriate skills to keep someone alive and promote their recovery until someone with more advanced training arrives. First aid Courses can be organised through the Queensland Ambulance Service, the Red Cross, St John's Ambulance and other community groups.

When you phone the 000 operator, they may remain on the line and give you advice as to how to help the patient until the paramedics arrive. The best people to handle any medical emergency are health professionals, so please remember that these basic first aid steps set out below are not a complete guide. First aid basics are essential in every household and we would encourage your participation in an accredited first aid course. The following is provided as a pointer only and does not equate to first aid or medical advice.

Six key steps

If someone is injured, six key steps will help keep everyone at the scene as safe as possible until professional help arrives.

1. Make sure the situation is safe, for example, keep clear of power lines, gas, smoke and fire.
2. If the injured person is unconscious and not responding, or if the incident has not otherwise been reported, call 000 immediately and ask for Ambulance.
3. If the person is not breathing, remove any blockage to the airway. If you (or any bystander) have the necessary skills, commence cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
4. Attend to severe bleeding or shock, and then care for injuries to muscles, bones and joints. Use gloves where available.
5. Monitor the injured person's condition while waiting for professional assistance to arrive.
6. Help the person rest in the most comfortable position and give reassurance.

Bleeding

- Cover the wound with a dressing or clean cloth and place direct pressure on it.
- Encourage the person to lie down if necessary.
- Raise the injured part above the level of the heart, but take great care if you suspect a broken bone.
- Cover the dressing with a bandage to hold it in place.
- If the bleeding does not stop, apply additional dressings, pads and bandages on top of existing ones.

Burns

- Cool the burn with plenty of clean, cold running water.
- Do not break blisters.
- Gently remove rings, watches, belts or tight clothing (unless sticking to the burn).
- Cover burned areas with dry, clean, non-stick dressings or cloth.
- Treat for shock as required.

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Shock

- Encourage the person to lie down.
- Keep the victim from getting either cold or overheated.
- Raise the legs about 30cm, if you don't suspect broken bones.
- Do not give food or drink.

Injuries to muscles, bones and joints

- Rest the injured part. Avoid movements that cause pain.
- Immobilize the injured part before moving the victim or giving additional care.
- Apply ice or a cold pack to reduce swelling and pain.
- Raise the injured area to slow the flow of blood and reduce swelling.

Contents of a basic first aid kit for the home

First aid kits vary according to their particular use. So it's important that yours contains the right one for your situation. The contents of the kit for a city family home will be different to one you have on the tractor on the farm, and different to the kit you have in the car, caravan or boat.

As a minimum, the basic first aid kit should contain:

- Triangular bandages
- Crepe ('conforming' or elastic) bandages of varying widths
- Non-adhesive dressings, varying sizes
- Disposable gloves (medium and large), preferably non-latex ones
- Thermal blanket
- Notepad and pencil
- Plastic bags, varying sizes
- Adhesive tape (2.5cm wide – preferably a permeable tape such as Micropore)
- Resuscitation mask or face shield.

Other equipment can include:

- Medium combine dressing pads (9 x 20cm)
- Large combine dressing pads (20 x 20cm)
- Adhesive dressing strips (bandaids)
- Medium gauze dressing (7.5 x 7.5cm)
- 4 sterile tubes of saline solution (minimum 10ml)
- 1 pair scissors
- 1 pair tweezers
- First aid booklet.

Call triple zero (000) in an emergency

ask for ambulance, stay with the person and resuscitate

	<p>1 Check for Danger</p> <p>Ensure safety for yourself, bystanders and casualty. If safe, remove casualty from water as soon as possible.</p>	<p>6 Start Compressions</p> <p>Adults – place heel of hand in centre of chest. Place other hand on top of first. Children 1 – 8 years – place heel of hand in centre of chest. Infants <1 year – place 2 fingers in centre of chest. Compress 1/3 depth of chest. Compress 30 times.</p>	
	<p>2 Check Response</p> <p>Can you hear me? Open your eyes. What's your name? Squeeze my hand.</p>	<p>7 Position the airway</p> <p>Adults and children – tilt head backward. Place one hand on the forehead and use the other hand to lift the chin. Infants <1 year – do not tilt head. Place one hand on the forehead and use the other hand to support the chin.</p>	
	<p>3 Send for help NOW call triple zero (000)</p> <p>Phone for an ambulance. Remain calm while answering the questions: - exact location of the incident - phone number you are calling from - what has occurred. Follow the instructions from the ambulance service.</p>	<p>8 Start breaths</p> <p>Adults and children – seal nose and give 2 breaths into mouth. Infants <1 year – give 2 breaths into mouth and nose. Watch for chest to rise.</p>	
	<p>4 Clear Airway</p> <p>If water or vomit is present in mouth, roll casualty on side, tilt face downwards and clear mouth with your fingers.</p>	<p>9 Repeat breaths & compressions</p> <p>Repeat 30 chest compressions and 2 breaths. Continue until ambulance arrives or person regains consciousness or it becomes impossible for you to continue.</p>	
	<p>5 Check for normal Breathing</p> <p>Look and feel for rising and falling chest. Listen and feel for breath sounds. If the patient is not breathing normally, commence resuscitation.</p>	<p>10 Attach a Defibrillator as soon as available. Follow the prompts</p> <p>If injured person shows signs of recovery, roll onto side and check if they are breathing. Reassure the person and bystanders.</p>	

Learn first aid. Contact www.ambulance.qld.gov.au or 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

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Displaying an up-to-date CPR Chart in a prominent location within your household may be a good idea.

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Coping in Emergency Situations

People react to emergency situation, such as extreme weather events in a range of ways. You need to understand that your emotional reactions may also change.

Natural Reactions

During or following the emergency you may experience a range of physical, behavioural and emotional reactions. This is both common and normal. Reactions may include:

- Shock and disbelief, or increased focus
- Fear and anxiety, including shaking, nausea, diarrhoea and difficulty in breathing
- Helplessness, or hope/strength
- Guilt or shame
- Horror
- Depression, anger and grief

These reactions may change, be delayed, or may not occur. Everyone is different and will experience the same event differently.

Being prepared by following the steps outlined in this kit (Prepare an Emergency Plan and Emergency kits) can help you feel like you are more in control.

What to do

Keeping calm may help to control your fear and actions. Remember that someone may need your help and that you may also need help. If you are feeling particularly anxious or frightened, follow this advice:

- Keep your family together wherever possible
- Shelter and safety are a priority in the coming hours and days
- Comfort each other and support those who are with you or have come together during or after the emergency - everyone will react differently
- Focus on your feelings and thoughts - talk calmly about them with family or friends who you can easily talk with
- Focus on what practical tasks you and your family can do - practical actions are helpful and will lesson anxiety
- Monitor information from emergency services by listening to our radio or television
 - DO NOT continuously watch disturbing footage on television. If necessary, take turns listening to the news with other adult members of your family or household.
- If separated from family members, find out where they are and arrange to reunite with them when it is safe.
- When the danger has passed, check your neighbours are safe.

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Helping Children

After an emergency, children are often afraid that the event will happen again, someone will get hurt or injured, they will be separated from the family, or that they will be left alone. Children may also appear to be coping better than they are. Children are generally resilient. To help children cope:

- Comfort and re-assure them
- Keep them with you
- Explain what is happening and what they may be feeling
- Encourage them to talk, draw and play about what happened, and respond simply and clearly to their questions.
- Let them help
- Avoid exposure to excessive television replays of events
- Provide normal activities such as school and shared family activities as soon as possible, when safety is assured.

Positive actions and attitudes, and comforting yourself and others, will help adults, families and children deal with emergencies. However, should feelings become too intense or persistent after the emergency, consult your local health service. State and Territory health authorities have professionals who can help you deal with these normal reactions to an emergency and extreme weather events.

Information and Advice

Keeping Healthy

The most important things you can do to stay healthy are:

- eat a balanced and nutritious diet
- be smoke free
- be physically active
- have a supportive social life
- drink more water
- enjoy alcohol and other less healthy choices in moderation
- have at least a couple of people you can confide in for support and advice
- have the recommended screening tests and take preventative medications (if required)
- recognise your limits and when you may need some time-out (and permit yourself to have the time-guilt free!)

This '23 1/2 hours—What is the single best thing we can do for our health? YouTube Video provides great advice on the importance of just 30 minutes a day.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUaInS6HIGo>

Food additives to avoid

Maintaining a healthy diet also includes avoiding food additives as much as possible. Food additives have been reported to cause allergic reactions and attention and behavioural interruptions. Knowing what to look for might help keep them out of the household shopping trolley.

For example, food additives to be avoided include:

Food Colourings	102, 104, 107, 110, 120-129, 131, 132, 133, 142, 151-156, 160a and 160b.
Flavor enhancers	Glutamates & MSG 620-625, Disodium Guanylate 627, Disodium Inosinate 631, Ribonucleotides 635, (HVP), Hydrogenated Foods, 1201
Preservatives	Benzoates 210-218, Nitrites 249-252, Propionates 280-283
Antioxidants	TBHQ BHA, BHT, 319-321
Sweetners	Aspartame 951, Cyclamate 952, Saccharin 954, 961-962

Please note this is a general guide only & is not intended to suit all health needs. For more information about food additives visit the Food intolerance Network

at www.fedup.com.au



Why do you need a GP?

Keeping healthy is more than diet and exercise. While physical health is important, it is just as vital to ensure your emotional and social health are looked after. Your GP is a valuable resource when it comes to your health care. Far beyond dealing with coughs and sniffles, they are the gate keepers to many resources that are available to help you improve your health. They can assist with dietary changes, suggest enjoyable physical activities, be supportive when you're feeling down, or encourage the growth of your social self. For people with chronic illness, your GP can coordinate your care and ensure that your multi-disciplinary team provides you with integrated care.

How to choose a doctor?

You should be able to consider your GP as a partner in managing your health needs. It is important to develop a supportive relationship with your regular doctor, so that you feel confident that they are working to support your best outcomes. You may not "click" with the first doctor you visit, and you are well within your rights to decide to "move on"

if you don't feel that you can communicate well with your current doctor. If you do decide to change GPs, request that copies of your medical files get transferred to your new GP to ensure that everyone is up-to-date with your health care needs.

When choosing a doctor, it is important to consider:

- ability to get an appointment when you need it
- the availability of long consultations
- travel time and accessibility (especially if you have mobility considerations)
- bulk billing
- size of the practice
- after hours availability
- home visits

Many GP practices are booked well in advanced, so it is important to plan your regular visits with this in mind and ring for an appointment as early as possible. This enables the GP to organise their time so that they can provide quality care for each patient and also means that you don't end up being inconvenienced.

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How to have a successful GP visit

- Make an appointment at a time that suits you to avoid waiting, call ahead on the day of the appointment to check if your doctor is running on time
- Request a 'long appointment' if you have a number of issues to discuss
- Most practices have 'emergency appointments' set aside for urgent cases if you have an emergency
- Be honest about your current problem – it is important for the doctor to have a true understanding of your concerns, even if it involves a sensitive matter
- Discuss any worries or concerns early in the consultation so the doctor understands the importance of these issues for you
- Be honest about your lifestyle habits—smoking, drug taking, physical activity, diet, and sexual activity habits can all affect your disease risk and may alter how certain medications affect you
- Let your doctor know of any personal or family medical history
- Bring details of your current medications, vitamins, over the counter pills, and alternative therapies with you to the appointment. Remember to update the doctor if anything changes.
- You may wish to fill in the following table to bring with you to your consultation: (Refer to the medication inventory and Healthy Man/Woman Checklist):

Note: Using a pencil to complete this section might be a good idea.

Current Medication List				
Drug Name (brand/generic)	What it is for	When it is taken	How much is taken	What side effects/other issues you've experienced with the medication

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- Feel free to bring a friend or relative for support
- Be an active and informed patient—do not be afraid to ask the doctor to explain what they've said again.
- There can be a lot of information exchanged during your consultation, and doctors are aware that it can be overwhelming.
- By the time you leave the appointment, you should have a clear understanding of:
 - what is wrong and how serious it is
 - what your choices are
 - what tests and follow up care is required

Useful Questions to ask your GP

Consulting a doctor can be a confusing time, and it's easy to forget to ask important things about your diagnosis. The following are useful starting points to help you become an engaged patient:

Consulting a doctor

Tell me more about my condition, tests, and treatment.

How will the tests help me, and what is involved?

What are the standard treatment methods?

What symptoms should I be aware of with my condition?

What risks are associated with the test/treatment?

What are the risks if I don't have the treatment?

Are there any alternatives?

Can you tell me about my medications?

How long will I be on this medication?

How will my medications interact with each other?

What will happen if I run out of this medication or forget to take it?

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If questions spring to mind between visits, it's useful to write them down to bring up in your next consultation.

If you are referred to a specialist, important factors to consider are:

Consulting a specialist
What can this specialist offer you?
Are there other specialists who can also treat your condition?
What is the specialist's experience in managing your condition?
Where is the specialist located?
Do they have a consulting room locally?
If not, are there any other specialists that would be closer?
What transportation or accommodation arrangements are available to me or need to be considered?

Out-of-Pocket Expenses
How much will each Treatment or Appointment cost?
How much will I be out-of-pocket?
How much of each treatment/appointment will be covered by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Medicare <input type="checkbox"/> Veterans Affairs <input type="checkbox"/> Health Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> Amount left that I will have to pay for: _____
When will I be expected to pay?

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The Healthy Patient

Even when you feel well, it is important to ensure you are up-to-date with your health screening checks. A 'check up' helps in the early detection of diseases—well before they've developed to a stage of causing you problems.

During your check-up you should talk to your doctor about which of the health conditions contained in the Healthy Men/Women Checklist apply to you (see the Personal Health and Medical Information Record) and when and how often you should be tested.

If you think of questions for the doctor, write them down and bring them to your next visit.

The contact details provided here were current at 1 June 2012, however are subject to change.

More Information

Please take a few moments to record your household Medical and Alternative Health services and contact details below.

Medical and Alternative Health Contacts	
Name	Contact Details