



Calling 911 is essential in getting medical attention to those who need it in an emergency, but it is important to know when calling 911 is appropriate, and to try to avoid calling for non-emergencies. Operators deal with many emergencies every day, and they must be available to get immediate help to those who need it most.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when deciding to call 911.

- **Call 911 for emergencies.** Emergencies are situations that require immediate medical attention. Among others, these include bleeding that does not stop, large wounds or burns, loss of consciousness, choking or trouble breathing, asthma or allergy attacks, heart attacks and stroke.
- **Give clear and detailed information.** If you do call 911, an emergency dispatcher will ask you to describe the situation. It is important to give as much information as possible to them about how the incident occurred and what happened, so they can determine which emergency personnel would be best to send to the scene.
- **Don't hang up.** When on the phone with a 911 dispatcher, don't hang up unless the dispatcher tells you to, as they may require additional information about the incident.
- **Don't call 911 for non-emergencies.** Don't call 911 for minor illness or injury — such as a cold or a sprained ankle — for pets or when the power is out. However, if you're unsure whether your situation is an emergency, it is safest to call 911 anyway and let the operator decide if emergency care is needed.