



DOWNLAND HEARTSTART

Community First Responders

For East Dean, Friston, Birling Gap & Crowlink

Basic Life Support Provided By Local Volunteers

Registered as a Charity No. 1137441

Coughs and Sneezes

‘Coughs & sneezes spread diseases - catch them in your handkerchief’ goes the saying. Our Responders don’t get many ‘shouts’ to people with coughs and sneezes but they get plenty from people who have fallen over.

So how about another version - ‘Ruffled carpets, pets-a-sleeping, slippy carpet causes falling.’ We come across a number of people who are not too good on their pins (this is a medical term) yet their homes and gardens contain all number of things which are liable to trip up the unwary. Uneven paving, carpets and trailing wires are all examples. As we know a fall often leads to a broken hip and it may take a long time to recover from this. So, if your pins aren’t what they were (or you know somebody who has dodgy ones) check the house and the garden and insist that the dog or cat snoozes off the beaten track. But returning to coughs & sneezes - don’t forget your flu jabs this year.

As always we need more volunteers to act as Responders and if the medical terms used above have not put you off and you are reasonably sound in wind and limb please give us a call. You will be made most welcome.

Nellie the Elephant (The Responders' Tune)

“Nellie the Elephant” is the song that our Responders ‘sing’ when giving chest compressions to someone having a heart attack. The rhythm of the song gives them the beat to give 100 compressions per minute which is the recommended pace.

The British Heart Foundation suggests that people could use the beat of the song “Stayin’ Alive” as demonstrated by Vinnie Jones. Clearly, whichever song you use, if the patient joins in, you will know that you have achieved a good result!

The advice is Dial 999 then commence chest compressions. Continue these until help arrives. The Foundation also recommends that you do not attempt to give mouth to mouth resuscitation. There are two reasons for this. First most people are reluctant to do mouth to mouth and the result may be that they don’t do anything. Second, even if a person has stopped breathing there should still be sufficient oxygen in their system, to last for 14 minutes. But unless the heart is

beating this oxygen will not be distributed to the parts of the body where it is needed – like the brain.

If there is a defibrillator available this should be used and the voice prompts followed although rescue breaths can be disregarded if you are unhappy about doing these. We still need more Community First Responders. Please consider this and contact us for more information. We can and do save lives.

Never Hesitate to Dial 999

You should never hesitate to dial 999 when faced with what you believe to be an urgent medical condition. However, although the ambulance service will take your concerns seriously they may, after careful questioning, suggest an alternative to sending an ambulance crew out to you. They might arrange for a Doctor or a nurse to visit. Sometimes, they might, for your own benefit, encourage you to make your own way to hospital. For example, if you are dealing with a nose bleed that will not stop, it might be dealt with more quickly if the sufferer could be taken to hospital in a private car. If you wait for an ambulance, the crew cannot simply put the patient into the vehicle and drive off. They would be obliged to examine you, do tests and start the inevitable paper-work before leaving. So, self-help is sometimes the most effective way of getting treatment.

Of course we have little control over when we will become ill but we can take precautions to prevent accidents occurring – the vast majority of which occur in the home. So, keep an eye on any elderly neighbours during the winter and especially in icy conditions.

We currently have only five active Responders and they will cover as much of the holiday period as they are able. Luckily we have three people who are awaiting training but clearly we need more. So please think about this important and rewarding work. You must be at least 18 and have the use of a car but lack of previous experience does not matter as basic and realistic training is provided. You would be asked to make a commitment of only a few hours each month. If you would like more information then please contact us for an informal chat.
