

hyperventilation

Hyperventilation (or over-breathing) is when a victim breathes faster than necessary resulting in too much oxygen in the blood. Hyperventilation can result in lightheadedness or unconsciousness because the brain's breathing centre relies on a delicate balance of oxygen and carbon dioxide. Hyperventilation is simple to treat from a first aid perspective.

Signs & Symptoms:

- High rate of respiration
- Gaspings
- Panting
- Lightheadedness
- Confusion
- Tingling of the hands, feet and around the mouth

DID YOU KNOW?

If this has never happened to the victim, their over-breathing could be a sign of a more serious medical problem (such as a heart attack). Call 911 immediately if you suspect this to be the case.

Treatment:

- Reassure the victim and treat for shock
- Use pursed lip breathing to slow their rate of respiration (breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth with pursed or puckered lips) – breathe with them
- Call 911 if situation worsens

NOTE: A quick reference guide is not a replacement for first aid and CPR training – get trained today and save a life.

