

Fainting

Definition:

Fainting is a temporary loss of consciousness from a sudden decrease of blood flow to your brain. An episode usually lasts a few seconds or minutes.

Causes of fainting:

- Vasovagal syncope: this can occur when a person experiences a stressful event. Examples include the sight of blood, emotional stress, emotional trauma, or pain
- Hyperventilating (breathing too fast)
- Dehydration or overheating
- Standing up too quickly (orthostatic hypotension)
- Skipping too many meals
- Seizure
- Hypoglycemia
- Head injury
- Abnormal heart rhythm

Treatment:

- Ensure safety of the scene
- Help the person lie down
- Elevate their legs if possible
- Monitor vital signs
- Check for any injuries
- Offer cold water and/or food
- If you have seizure, turn their head to the side so that their tongue does not accidentally block their breathing and so that any vomit will not cause choking
- If there is no rapid improvement send the person to the ER
- If you have head injury, send the person to the ER