



Emergency oxygen
when you need it.™

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This brief is one in a series of non-technical articles that discuss bystander delivery of oxygen during breathing emergencies

Good Samaritan Laws and Emergency Oxygen Use

According to a well-known story, a man from the Samaria region of ancient Palestine (a Samaritan) came upon another man who had been beaten, robbed, and left for dead on the road. While others walked by, the Samaritan stopped and bandaged the victim's wounds, transported him to an inn, and paid for victim's stay during his recovery. Today the term *Good Samaritan* is used to identify bystanders who willingly come to the aid of others in need, like victims of accidents, cardiac and breathing emergencies.

Who "Qualifies" as a Good Samaritan?

In general, anyone who voluntarily helps another person during an emergency without expectation of compensation is a Good Samaritan. These exemplary citizens may be medically trained as a physician who can offer skilled care, or a person with no formal medical training but has the desire to help another person in need.

Are Good Samaritans at Risk for Lawsuits?

There is no one legal standard across the United States but most States have lawsⁱ that protect Good Samaritans from lawsuit, depending upon the actions they take. If a Good Samaritan's actions are legally challenged then courts may apply the "reasonable person" standard – what would a reasonable person have done in the same situation.ⁱⁱ Good Samaritans who are not medically trained should not "play doctor" but anyone can offer important assistance to help another during an emergency.



Sculpture of The Good Samaritan

What Assistance Can a Good Samaritan Offer?

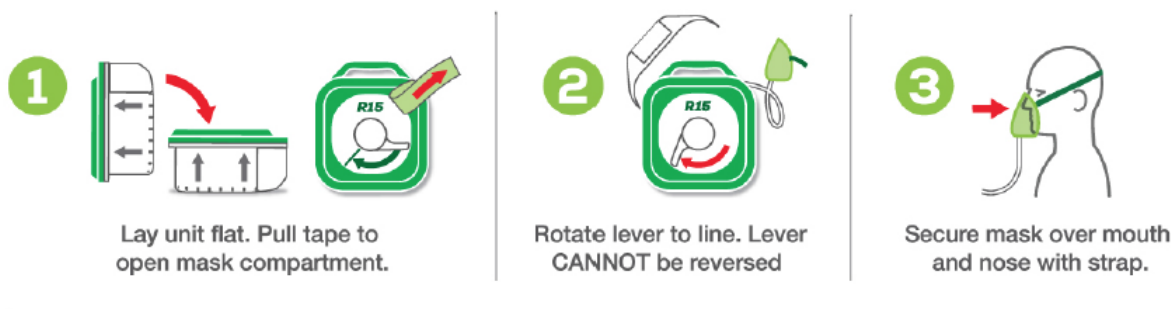
People who are medically trained may diagnose the type and severity of an injury a victim sustains and provide specific medical care. Both medically trained and untrained bystanders, however, can take basic actions when faced with a medical emergency.

- **Observe.** Be “situationally aware” when an emergency occurs. Who appears to be injured or experiencing a medical emergency? Are their symptoms obvious like an open wound or subtle such as pain in an arm that may signal a heart attack?
- **Assess.** Ask the apparent victim about their status. Is the victim experiencing pain, shortness of breath or other symptoms? Can the victim move themselves? If the victim is unresponsive, can they be stirred by gentle shaking and asking, “Are you okay?”
- **Alert. Call 911** for professional emergency medical service (EMS) assistance and be prepared to give the operator information as to the location of the victim, when you found the victim, and the victim’s status.
- **Act.** Take reasonable action to assist the victim. Reasonable action does not include moving an injured victim unless they are in imminent danger of a greater risk (e.g. explosion). Does the victim have prescription medication on their person, and can you help them without administering medication (e.g. opening a pill bottle)? Is the patient unresponsive with no pulse and not breathing and can you start cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)?

Medical Tools Designed for Good Samaritan Use

As medical technology advances, Good Samaritans have greater access to life-saving tools in public places like airports, malls and corporate offices. In addition to popular automated external defibrillators (AED) that can *restart* a victim’s heart, emergency oxygen is also now available thanks to the **R15 Portable Emergency Oxygen** device. By simply following the directions that are clearly printed on the R15 device (below) any Good Samaritan can provide an additional level of medical support until professional EMS personnel arrive on scene.

Easy to use - activates with just 3 simple steps



To read more articles like this one please visit <https://rapidoxygen.com/white-papers>

ⁱ State Law: Good Samaritan, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, [online 11Apr19> <https://www.responsibility.org/alcohol-statistics/state-map/issue/good-samaritan/>

ⁱⁱ Do All States Have Good Samaritan Laws?, VeryWellHealth, [online 11Apr19> <https://www.verywellhealth.com/do-all-states-have-good-samaritan-laws-1298836>