

FAINTING



What is fainting?

Fainting, "blacking out," or syncope is the temporary loss of consciousness followed by the return to full wakefulness.

What causes fainting?

Fainting or syncope occurs when the brain is deprived of blood, oxygen, or glucose.

Fainting can happen when:

- ▣ you stand up too fast
- ▣ you work or play hard, especially if it's very hot
- ▣ you begin to breathe too fast (hyperventilation)
- ▣ you get very upset, affecting the nerves that control your blood pressure
- ▣ you are taking medicine for high blood pressure
- ▣ your blood sugar drops. This can happen if you don't eat for a long time or if you have diabetes.

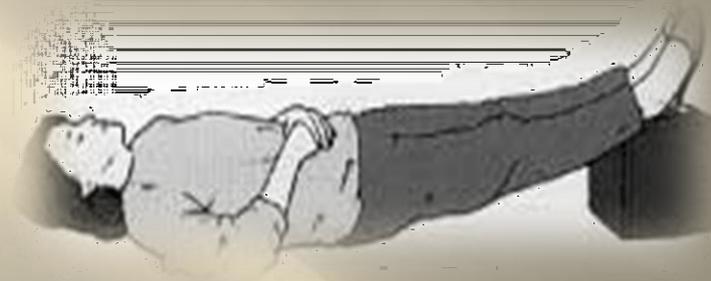
Are there signs and symptoms before the person faints?

There may be:

- ▣ lightheadedness
- ▣ sweating
- ▣ dizziness or vertigo
- ▣ nausea
- ▣ blurring of vision
- ▣ muffled hearing
- ▣ tingling sensations in the body

What Should I do If I Think I'm Going To Faint?

- ▣ Lie down.



- ▣ If you can't lie down, sit and bend forward with your head between your knees.



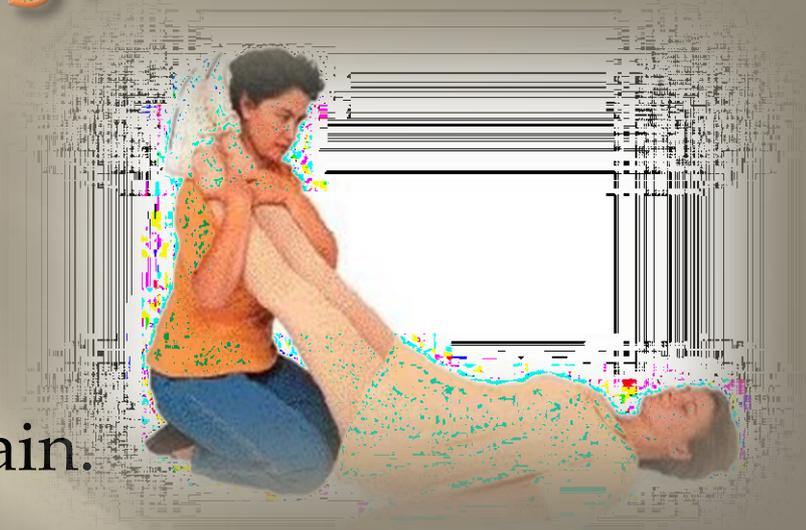
This helps get the blood flowing to your brain.

- ▣ Wait until you feel better before trying to stand up.
- ▣ When you stand up, do so slowly.

What is the First Aid for Fainting?

1. Make the Person Safe

- ▣ Lay the person flat on his or her back.
- ▣ Elevate the person's legs to restore blood flow to the brain.
- ▣ Loosen tight clothing.



2. Try to Revive the Person

- ▣ Shake the person vigorously, tap briskly, or yell.
- ▣ If the person doesn't respond, call emergency services or shift to hospital immediately.

3. Do Home Care for Simple Fainting

- ▣ If and when the person is alert, give fruit juice, especially if the person has not eaten in more than 6 hours or has diabetes.
- ▣ Stay with the person until he or she is fully recovered.

4. Call a Health Care Provider if the person

- ▣ hit his or her head when fainting
- ▣ faints more than once in a month
- ▣ is pregnant or has a heart condition or other serious illness
- ▣ experiences unusual symptoms, such as chest pain, shortness of breath, confusion, blurred vision, or difficulty talking

Who is at risk for fainting?

People who have certain medical conditions are more likely to faint. These conditions include:

- ▣ certain cardiac conditions
- ▣ diabetes
- ▣ anxiety or panic disorders
- ▣ dehydration (diarrhoea / vomiting)
- ▣ low blood sugar (starvation)

Fainting (Syncope) At A Glance

- ▣ Being unconscious is not normal; those affected should seek medical care.
- ▣ Fainting is not normal, although the cause may not be serious.
- ▣ When in doubt, calling the emergency medical system.
- ▣ It is always appropriate to seek medical care.
- ▣ Some causes of fainting can be a warning of a life-threatening situation. Most times, however, it is a relatively benign situation.

compiled by Dr. Arundhati Chavan, Medical Officer, Christ
University, courtesy:

<http://www.webmd.com> [http://](http://www.aafp.org/home.html)

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