

## Recovery Position

**Recommended Age: 12+**

### Goal

- To demonstrate how and when to put someone in the recovery position and when to call for help.

### Instructions

- Ask youth, **“What should you do if someone is passed out from drugs or alcohol?”** When someone is passed out and they can’t wake up, you can roll them into the recovery position.
- **“How can you tell if someone is passed out or just sleeping?”** Try to wake them up by calling their name, talking in their ear, or nudging them, but be aware they may wake up startled. If they don’t wake up, but are breathing and respond, they are likely unconscious and can be put in the recovery position.
- We are going to demonstrate the recovery position.
- Ask if there is a volunteer who is willing to lie down on the floor and let the facilitator roll them into the recovery position. If there are no volunteers, or if the facilitator prefers not to use a youth volunteer, use a teacher or co-facilitator.
- Make sure the demo is happening in a visible location.
- Get consent from youth before putting them into the recovery position.

### Recovery Position Steps

- Tilt head backwards to open airways.
- Bend one arm out at their side.
- Place other arm across chest with hand against cheek.
- Bend the knee to a 90° angle. This will help you roll them over, no matter your strength or their size.
- Roll them over so they are supported by their arm.
- The bent leg and arm give stability, while the hand under the head keeps their airways open so they don’t choke on their vomit. (See

the following diagram.)

## Debrief

- Ask youth, **“Why do you put someone in the recovery position?”** (So they don’t choke on their vomit if they are throwing up.)
- Ask youth, **“What should you do after the person is in the recovery position?”** If the person is passed out, it means they may have alcohol poisoning or may be overdosing. Encourage youth to call for help or get the person to a hospital or nursing station if they think the other person may be in danger, suspect alcohol has been mixed with other drugs, or there are severe risk signs, such as non-responsive, irregular breathing, clammy/pale skin, or blood in their vomit. Encourage youth to check for these signs and to ask if anyone knows how much or what they have taken/drunk.
- If someone at a party is passed out and does not have any of the severe risk signs, still keep them in the recovery position in a safe place and check on them often or stay with them. This is important, because their blood alcohol level could still be rising.
- When in doubt, it is much safer to call for help. For the most part, paramedics or other emergency responders just want to make sure people are safe. FYI: When 911 is called, an ambulance is sent out and a paramedic stays on the phone with the person who called to assist them in helping the youth who is hurt. If they are under 18, a parent/guardian is contacted from the hospital. An ambulance fee is charged to the person who is transported or their guardian. They are also covered by insurance plans, as well as Child and Family Services and Social Assistance.
- Now that you have demonstrated the recovery position, encourage youth to try practicing it.

## Additional Activities


Ideally, this activity can be followed by:

- Refusal Skills Brainstorm
- Abstinence Activities Scenario Cards & Brainstorm


- Decisional Balancing Reflection

# Recovery Position Demonstration<sup>i</sup>


## STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PUTTING SOMEONE IN THE RECOVERY POSITION




- 1 KNEEL BESIDE THE PERSON
- 2 STRAIGHTEN THEIR ARMS AND LEGS




- 3 FOLD THE ARM CLOSEST TO YOU OVER THEIR CHEST




- 4 PLACE THE OTHER ARM AT A RIGHT ANGLE TO THEIR BODY



- 5 GET THE LEG CLOSEST TO YOU AND BEND THE KNEE



- 6 WHILE SUPPORTING THE PERSON'S HEAD AND NECK, GENTLY TAKE THE BENT KNEE CLOSEST TO YOU AND VERY GENTLY ROLL THE PERSON AWAY FROM YOU. ADJUST THE UPPER LEG, SO BOTH THE HIP AND KNEE ARE BENT AT RIGHT ANGLES. ENSURE THE PERSON IS STEADY AND CANNOT ROLL.



- 7 TILT THE HEAD BACK AND MAKE SURE AIRWAYS ARE CLEAR AND OPEN

---

<sup>i</sup> Crack in the ice. (n.d.). *Step-by-step guide to putting someone in the recovery position*. Crack in the Ice. Retrieved June 22, 2021, from <https://cracksintheice.org.au/doc/recovery-position.pdf>