

How to Treat DCI

IN ANY DIVING INCIDENT **ASSUME DECOMPRESSION ILLNESS (DCI)** UNTIL TOLD OTHERWISE

CONTACT THE EMERGENCY SERVICES AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY

Prolonging the time between the onset of the symptoms and the commencement of treatment may increase the chances of permanent damage to the body. Whilst waiting for the emergency services, damage to the diver can be minimised by following the procedure outlined below.

MONITOR AIRWAY, BREATHING AND CIRCULATION. RESUSCITATE IF NECESSARY. Supporting life must take priority over all the other first aid procedures.

LAY THE CASUALTY FLAT

ADMINISTER 100 % OXYGEN IMMEDIATELY (First 15 mins is critical)

- Record the time that the patient received oxygen and their response, as this information will be needed by the hyperbaric chamber team.
- Allow the patient to breathe air for 15 mins if they react badly to the oxygen, before the oxygen is tried again.
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TREAT FOR SHOCK

- Keep the diver warm, although do not rewarm too rapidly as this can encourage bubble formation.
- Keep the diver quiet and still.
- Reassure the diver at all times.

CONTACT EMERGENCY SERVICES (UK BASED)

- Shore Dive – DIAL 999 and ask for the Coastguard.
- Boat Dive – PAN PAN MEDICO on Channel 16.
- Be ready to give the emergency services the following information:
 - Age of Diver
 - Condition - Improving/ Stable/ Worsening/ No problems
 - Muscle Weakness - Can the diver stand/ walk, are their arms weak

ENCOURAGE A CONSCIOUS AND STABLE PATIENT TO DRINK NON-ALCOHOLIC FLUIDS

- Monitor quantities taken.

COMPLETE A DIVE INCIDENT CHECK LIST