

IV. LOSS OF CONSCIOUSNESS: Syncope or Fainting

A. Treatment: Ammonia capsule if needed.

1. If the individual “feels faint”:
 - Ammonia ampules may be used: (crush and wave near patient's nose)
 - Have patient lie flat with feet elevated or sit with their head down for several minutes
2. Unconsciousness:
 - Place flat on back, with feet elevated
 - Unconsciousness from fainting should only last seconds
 - Ammonia ampules may be used: (crush and wave near patient's nose)
 - Have patient rest in a quiet area for 10 minutes after regaining consciousness. Slowly have patient move to a sitting position and then standing, checking to make sure no symptoms recur.

Anaphylaxis can be distinguished from a vasovagal response by the quality of the pulse. In the case of anaphylaxis, the pulse may be rapid, thready, and weak. The patient’s blood pressure may be falling. In a vasovagal response, the pulse should be slow.

See APPENDIX A for additional signs and symptoms of syncope or fainting.