

BLEEDING

Bleeding refers to the loss of blood. Bleeding can happen inside the body (internally) or outside the body (externally). Always seek emergency assistance for severe bleeding, and if internal bleeding is suspected. Serious injuries don't always bleed heavily, and some relatively minor injuries (for example, scalp wounds) can bleed quite a lot.

Direct pressure will stop most external bleeding, and is the most important first aid step.



Always wash your hands before and after giving first aid to someone who is bleeding, in order to avoid infection.

Try to use disposable gloves when treating someone who is bleeding. Disposable gloves should be in every home first aid kit. You can catch viral hepatitis if you touch infected blood, and HIV can be spread if infected blood gets into an open wound -- even a small one.

Blood loss can cause bruises (blood collected under the skin), which usually result from a blow or a fall. They are dark, discolored areas on the skin. Apply a cool compress to the area as soon as possible to reduce swelling. Wrap the ice in a towel and place the towel over the injury. **Do not place ice directly on the skin.**

SYMPTOMS OF EXTERNAL BLEEDING

- Blood coming from an open wound

- Bruising

SYMPTOMS OF INTERNAL BLEEDING

- Abdominal pain and swelling
- Chest pain
- Blood in the stool, urine, or vomit
- Shock occurs after an unattended internal bleeding. Common symptoms and signs of shock are:
 - Confusion or decreasing alertness
 - Clammy skin and paleness
 - Dizziness or light-headedness after an injury
 - Shortness of breath
 - Weakness

FIRST AID

1. If the wound is superficial, wash it with soap and warm water and pat dry.
2. Lay the person down. This reduces the chances of fainting by increasing blood flow to the brain. When possible, raise up the part of the body that is bleeding.
3. Remove any obvious loose debris or dirt from a wound. If an object such as a knife or stick becomes stuck in the body, DO NOT remove it. Place pads and bandages around the object and tape the object in place.



4. Put pressure directly on an outer wound with a sterile bandage.
5. Maintain pressure until the bleeding stops.

6. If the bleeding is severe, get medical help. Keep the injured body part completely still. Lay the person flat, raise the feet about 12 inches, and cover the person with a coat or blanket. However, DO NOT move the person if there has been a head, neck, back, or leg injury, as doing so may make the injury worse. Get medical help as soon as possible.

DO NOT

- Remove a dressing if it becomes soaked with blood. Instead, add a new one on top



- Try to clean a wound after you get the bleeding under control. Get medical help

WHEN TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL

- Bleeding lasts more than ten minutes
- The wound might need stitches, or if gravel or dirt cannot be removed easily with gentle cleaning
- You think there may be internal bleeding or shock
- Signs of infection develop, including increased pain, redness, swelling, and yellow or brown fluid.
- The injury involves an animal or human bite
- The patient has not had a tetanus shot in the last 5-10 years

PREVENTION

Use good judgment and keep knives and sharp objects away from small children.