



First Aid for Cuts & Bruises

Small cuts and scrapes usually don't demand a visit to a doctor's office or the emergency room, but proper care is essential to keep the wound from getting infected or causing other complications.

With any injury, it's important to act promptly by examining the person who has been hurt. If you're the only one around or the first to find an injured person, look for the obvious: breathing, broken bones, and bleeding. For serious injuries, call for medical help immediately. When minor cuts and scrapes occur, follow these first-aid procedures:

- Apply pressure to the cut with a clean dressing or cloth to stop the bleeding.
- Cleanse the injured area with soap and water to remove harmful bacteria.
- Bandage the injury with a non-stick dressing. Make sure the bandage holds the dressing in place with a bit of pressure to help control any bleeding.

For severe bleeding, additional steps may be needed:

- Protect yourself from exposure to HIV and hepatitis by wearing latex or vinyl gloves when providing first aid to an injured co-worker.
- Apply direct pressure with the palm of the hand over the area of the wound using a thick pad of sterile gauze. Do not remove a dressing after placing it on the wound because bleeding may start again. If a dressing becomes soaked in blood, apply another dressing on top of it.
- Elevate a severely bleeding open wound on the head, neck, arm, or leg only if there is no evidence of a fracture. Raise the wound above the level of the victim's heart.
- Do not use a tourniquet. Tourniquets are rarely needed and should only be used as a last resort to save a life when all other methods have failed.
- Always get professional medical attention for injuries that cause severe bleeding.

If you get hurt on the job, get proper medical attention. Get medical treatment promptly from the on-site medical person or first-aider, go to an urgent care facility, or call 911. Always report injuries to your supervisor.

If you are injured at home, you may need to visit your family doctor or a nearby hospital emergency room. Always follow the instruction given to you by medical personnel. If your doctor or site medic wants you to change your wound dressing twice a day, be sure to do it. Seek additional treatment if a minor laceration or contusion becomes



infected; if the wound is hot, red, or swollen; or if you develop a fever. Otherwise, a minor cut can turn into a major medical event.

SAFETY REMINDER

You can't help someone in need if you don't have the proper supplies. Make sure you have a fully stocked first-aid kit nearby at work and somewhere in your home.