



# Toolbox Talks

## Skin Injuries



Proper first aid treatment for **minor cuts, scrapes, abrasions, and puncture wounds** is important to promote healing and prevent infection.

A puncture wound from a small object may not cause much bleeding, but these wounds can be deep and are at greater risk of infection.

1. After washing your hands, and putting on disposable gloves, if available, stop the bleeding. Apply gentle pressure with a clean bandage or cloth and elevate the wound until the bleeding stops.
2. Once the bleeding has stopped clean the wound with water. You can wash around the wound with mild soap, but don't get soap in the wound. Seek medical care if all the debris cannot be removed.
3. When the wound is clean, apply an antibiotic or petroleum jelly gently, in a thin layer, over the wound and then cover it with a bandage or gauze to keep it clean.
4. Make sure to change the dressing at least once a day and monitor the injury for signs of infection, like redness, warmth, swelling, pain, fever, or drainage.

Seek immediate medical care if the wound is:

- still bleeding after a few minutes of direct pressure
- from an animal bite
- deep and dirty
- caused by a metal object
- over a joint or to the head, neck, scrotum, chest or abdomen and could be deep

For skin injuries that have severe bleeding, stop the bleeding by placing a clean bandage or cloth on the wound and apply constant pressure. Do not remove the original gauze or bandage. If blood seeps through the gauze, add another bandage on top of it and keep pressing firmly on the area.

➤ Immobilize the injured body part as much as possible. Wait for emergency personnel to arrive or get the injured person to an emergency room.

A **rash caused a poisonous plant**, like poison ivy, oak, or sumac, can be painful and may result in itching, burning, or blistering on the skin.

1. Wash the skin gently and scrub under fingernails with soap and water.
2. Cool compresses and oatmeal baths can help to soothe the skin.
3. Apply calamine lotion or hydrocortisone cream to the skin to reduce itching.
4. Take an oral antihistamine like Benadryl to help reduce the itching sensation but beware that these nonprescription drugs can cause drowsiness.
5. Avoid scratching and bursting blisters which can lead to infection.

