



FIG 29-1 Sites of injuries to bones, joints, and soft tissues.

Contusions

A contusion (bruise) is damage to the soft tissue, subcutaneous structures, and muscle. The tearing of these tissues and small blood vessels and the inflammatory response lead to hemorrhage, edema, and associated pain when the child attempts to move the injured part. The escape of blood into the tissues is observed as **ecchymosis**, a black-and-blue discoloration.

Large contusions cause gross swelling, pain, and disability and usually receive immediate attention from health personnel. Smaller injuries may go unnoticed, allowing continued participation. However, they can become disabling after rest because of pain and muscle spasm. Immediate treatment consists of cold application, as in the treatment of sprains described later. Return to participation is