

MEDICAL PROTOCOL KNOWLEDGE BASE: WOUND CARE v1.0

1. ABRASIONS (Scrapes and Grazes)

Description: Top layer of skin is scraped off. Usually contains dirt or grit.

Immediate Steps:

- Wash your hands and wear gloves.
- Rinse the wound under cool running water to remove debris.
- Pat the area dry with a sterile gauze pad.
- Apply a non-adhesive sterile dressing.

Contraindications: Do not use alcohol, iodine, or hydrogen peroxide on the open wound as it delays healing.

2. BRUISES (Contusions)

Description: Bleeding under the skin without breaking the surface.

Immediate Steps:

- Rest the injured part.
- Apply a cold compress or ice pack wrapped in a cloth for 10-20 minutes.
- Elevate the limb to reduce swelling.

Contraindications: Do not apply ice directly to the skin; it can cause tissue damage.

3. BURNS (Thermal)

Description: Damage to skin caused by heat.

Immediate Steps:

- Move the person away from the heat source.
- Cool the burn with cool (not cold) running water for at least 20 minutes.
- Remove jewelry or restrictive clothing before swelling begins.
- Cover loosely with non-stick plastic wrap or a sterile dressing.

Contraindications: DO NOT apply butter, lotions, or ointments. DO NOT pop blisters.

4. CUTS AND LACERATIONS

Description: Cuts are smooth-edged; Lacerations are jagged tears.

Immediate Steps:

- Apply firm, direct pressure with a clean cloth or bandage until bleeding stops.
- Clean the surrounding area with mild soap and water.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment and cover with a sterile bandage.

Contraindications: If the wound is deep or won't stop bleeding after 10 minutes of pressure, do not wait; seek medical help.

5. STAB WOUNDS (Puncture Wounds)

Description: Deep, narrow wounds caused by pointed objects.

Immediate Steps:

- DO NOT REMOVE the object if it is still embedded (it may be stopping blood flow).
- Apply pressure AROUND the object.
- Use bulky padding to stabilize the object in place.
- Seek emergency medical services (EMS) immediately.

Contraindications: Never attempt to pull out an embedded object.

6. INGROWN NAILS

Description: The side of the toenail grows into the surrounding skin.

Immediate Steps:

- Soak the foot in warm water mixed with Epsom salt.
- Keep the area dry and clean.
- Wear wide-toed shoes.

Contraindications: Do not attempt to cut the nail out yourself ("bathroom surgery") as it is high risk for infection.

7. CLINICAL RED FLAGS (General)

Regardless of the wound type, seek a doctor if:

- The wound shows signs of infection (pus, redness, heat).
- The patient has not had a Tetanus shot in 5-10 years.
- The wound was caused by an animal or human bite.