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Wounds and Injuries

Also called: Traumatic injuries

An injury is damage to your body. It is a general term that refers to harm caused by accidents, **falls** [<https://medlineplus.gov/falls.html>] , hits, weapons, and more. In the U.S., millions of people injure themselves every year. These injuries range from minor to life-threatening. Injuries can happen at **work** [<https://medlineplus.gov/occupationalhealth.html>] or play [<https://medlineplus.gov/sportsinjuries.html>] , indoors or outdoors, driving a car, or walking across the street.

Wounds are injuries that break the skin or other body tissues. They include cuts, scrapes, scratches, and punctured skin. They often happen because of an accident, but surgery, sutures, and stitches also cause wounds. Minor wounds usually aren't serious, but it is important to clean them. Serious and infected wounds may require **first aid** [<https://medlineplus.gov/firstaid.html>] followed by a visit to your doctor. You should also seek attention if the wound is deep, you cannot close it yourself, you cannot stop the bleeding or get the dirt out, or it does not heal.


Other common types of injuries include:

- Animal bites [<https://medlineplus.gov/animalbites.html>]
- Bruises [<https://medlineplus.gov/bruises.html>]
- Burns [<https://medlineplus.gov/burns.html>]
- Dislocations [<https://medlineplus.gov/dislocations.html>]
- Electrical injuries [<https://medlineplus.gov/electricalinjuries.html>]
- Fractures [<https://medlineplus.gov/fractures.html>] (broken bones)
- Sprains and strains [<https://medlineplus.gov/sprainsandstrains.html>]


Start Here

- What Do I Need in My First Aid Kit? [<https://familydoctor.org/what-do-i-need-in-my-first-aid-kit/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/que-necesito-en-mi-botiquin-de-primeros-auxilios/?adfree=true>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Bacteria Culture Test [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/bacteria-culture-test/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/prueba-de-cultivo-de-bacterias/>]
- Diagnostic peritoneal lavage - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100159_1.htm] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/esp_presentations/100159_1.htm]
- Wound Drainage Culture (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/wound-culture.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/wound-culture.html>]

Learn More

- Q&A: Dr. Vance Fowler on Antibiotic Resistance [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2023/10/dr-vance-fowler-antibiotic-resistance>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Treatments and Therapies

- **Caring for Your Incision after Surgery** [<https://familydoctor.org/caring-for-your-incision-after-surgery/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/cuidado-de-las-incisiones/?adfree=true>]
- **Cuts and Scrapes: First Aid** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-cuts/basics/ART-20056711?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid-cuts/basics/art-20056711?p=1>]
- **Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy/about/pac-20394380?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/tests-procedures/hyperbaric-oxygen-therapy/about/pac-20394380?p=1>]
- **Puncture Wounds: First Aid** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-puncture-wounds/basics/ART-20056665?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid-puncture-wounds/basics/art-20056665?p=1>]
- **Severe Bleeding: First Aid** [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/first-aid/first-aid-severe-bleeding/basics/ART-20056661?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/first-aid/first-aid-severe-bleeding/basics/art-20056661?p=1>]
- **Suture, Surgical** [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/surgical-suture/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)
- **To Heal a Wound: Helping the Skin Fix Itself** [<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2023/10/heal-wound>]  (National Institutes of Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://salud.nih.gov/recursos-de-salud/nih-noticias-de-salud/curar-una-herida>]

Related Issues

- **Emergency Wound Care after a Natural Disaster** [<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/pdf/woundcare.pdf>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) - **PDF**
- **Injury and Death during Travel** [<https://www.cdc.gov/yellow-book/hcp/environmental-hazards-risks/injury-and-death-during-travel.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Scars and Wounds** [<https://www.cancer.org/cancer/managing-cancer/side-effects/hair-skin-nails/scars-and-wounds.html>] (American Cancer Society)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cancer.org/es/cancer/como-sobrellevar-el-cancer/efectos-secundarios/piel-cabello-unas/cicatrices-y-heridas.html>]



Specifics

- **Internal Bleeding** [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/home/injuries-and-poisoning/first-aid/internal-bleeding>] (Merck & Co., Inc.)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.merckmanuals.com/es-us/hogar/traumatismos-y-envenenamientos/primeros-auxilios/hemorragia-interna>]
- **Puncture Wounds** [<https://www.foothealthfacts.org/conditions/puncture-wounds>] (American College of Foot and Ankle Surgeons)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.foothealthfacts.org/conditions/puncture-wounds?lang=es-MX>]
- **Surgical Site Infection Basics** [<https://www.cdc.gov/surgical-site-infections/about/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)

Statistics and Research

- **FastStats: Accidents or Unintentional Injuries** [<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/accidental-injury.htm>] (National Center for Health Statistics)
- **Leading Causes of Death and Injury** [<https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/LeadingCauses.html>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Researchers Uncover Clues to Why Some Wounds Don't Heal** [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/newsroom/spotlight-on-research/researchers-uncover-clues-why-some-wounds-dont-heal>]  (National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases)
- **State Occupational Injuries, Illnesses, and Fatalities** [<https://www.bls.gov/iif/state-data.htm>] (Bureau of Labor Statistics)

Clinical Trials


- ClinicalTrials.gov: Lacerations [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Lacerations%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)
- ClinicalTrials.gov: Wounds and Injuries [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Wounds+and+Injuries%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Mortality of trauma patients in conflict-affected region: a retrospective observational study... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40751197>]
- Article: Organised trauma systems and designated trauma centres for improving outcomes in... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40747779>]
- Article: Trends and levels of the global, regional, and national burden of... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40744902>]
- Wounds and Injuries -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Wounds+and+Injuries%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+2+Years%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- American Red Cross [<https://www.redcross.org/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.redcross.org/cruz-roja.html>]
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [<https://www.cdc.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>]
- Federal Emergency Management Agency [<https://www.fema.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.fema.gov/es>]
- National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/>] 
Also in Spanish [<https://www.niams.nih.gov/es/portal-en-espanol>]

Children

- Bites and Scratches (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bites.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/bites.html>]
- Dealing with Cuts (For Parents) [<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/bleeding.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/bleeding.html>]
- What's a Scab? [<https://kidshealth.org/en/kids/scab.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/kids/scab.html>]

Teenagers

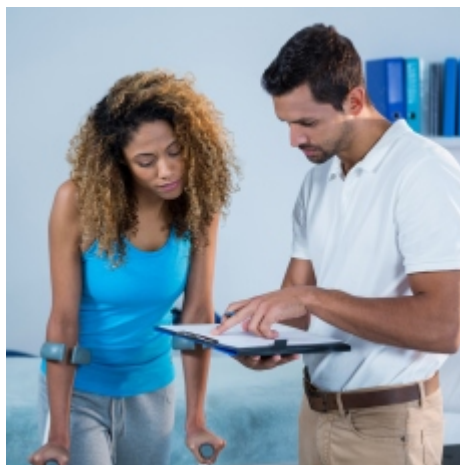
- Wound Healing and Care [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/wounds.html>] (Nemours Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://kidshealth.org/es/teens/wounds.html>]

Patient Handouts

- Bleeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000045.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000045.htm>]
- Crush injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000024.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)

Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000024.htm>]

- Cuts and puncture wounds [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000043.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000043.htm>]
- Electrical injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000053.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000053.htm>]
- Gunshot wounds - aftercare [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000737.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000737.htm>]
- How wounds heal [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000741.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000741.htm>]
- Laceration - sutures or staples - at home [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000498.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000498.htm>]
- Lacerations - liquid bandage [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000497.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000497.htm>]
- Surgical wound care - open [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000040.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000040.htm>]
- Surgical wound infection - treatment [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007645.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/007645.htm>]
- Wet-to-dry dressing changes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000315.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000315.htm>]
- Wound care centers [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000739.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/patientinstructions/000739.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

Bleeding [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000045.htm>]

Closed suction drain with bulb [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000039.htm>]

Crush injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000024.htm>]

Cuts and puncture wounds [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000043.htm>]

Diagnostic peritoneal lavage - series [https://medlineplus.gov/ency/presentations/100159_1.htm]

Electrical injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000053.htm>]

Genital injury [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000044.htm>]

Gunshot wounds - aftercare [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000737.htm>]

Hemovac drain [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000038.htm>]

How wounds heal [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000741.htm>]

Human bites - self-care [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000736.htm>]

Hyperbaric oxygen therapy [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002375.htm>]

Laceration - sutures or staples - at home [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000498.htm>]

Lacerations - liquid bandage [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000497.htm>]

Skin flaps and grafts - self-care [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000743.htm>]

Sterile technique [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000119.htm>]

Sternal exploration or closure [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007626.htm>]

Surgical wound care - closed [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000738.htm>]

Surgical wound care - open [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000040.htm>]

Surgical wound infection - treatment [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/007645.htm>]

Wet-to-dry dressing changes [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000315.htm>]

Wound care centers [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000739.htm>]

Related Health Topics

Bruises [<https://medlineplus.gov/bruises.html>]

Child Safety [<https://medlineplus.gov/childsafety.html>]

Electrical Injuries [<https://medlineplus.gov/electricalinjuries.html>]

Falls [<https://medlineplus.gov/falls.html>]

First Aid [<https://medlineplus.gov/firstaid.html>]

Foreign Bodies [<https://medlineplus.gov/foreignbodies.html>]

Safety [<https://medlineplus.gov/safety.html>]

Scars [<https://medlineplus.gov/scars.html>]

Surgery [<https://medlineplus.gov/surgery.html>]

Other Languages

Find health information in languages other than English [<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/woundsandinjuries.html>] on *Wounds and Injuries*

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