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Crush injury

A crush injury occurs when excessive force or pressure is put on a body part. This type of injury most often happens when part of the body is squeezed between two heavy objects.

Damage related to crush injuries include:

- Bleeding
- Bruising
- Compartment syndrome (increased pressure, usually in an arm or leg, that causes serious muscle, nerve, blood vessel, and tissue damage)
- Broken bone (fracture)
- Open wound (laceration)
- Nerve injury
- Infection (caused by bacteria that enter the body through a wound)

First Aid

Steps for first aid treatment of a crush injury are:

- Stop bleeding by applying direct pressure.
- Cover the area with a moist cloth or bandage. Then, raise the area above the level of the heart, if possible.
- If there is suspicion of a head, neck, or spinal injury, immobilize those areas if possible and then limit movement to only the crushed area.
- Call 911 or the local emergency number.

Crush injuries most often need to be evaluated in a hospital emergency department. Surgery may be needed.

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