



Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

C u t s o r L a c e r a t i o n s T r e a t m e n t

S e l f - C a r e a t H o m e

- Most bleeding can be stopped with direct pressure and time (rest and elevation are also helpful).
- Cleaning with a gentle soap and water will help reduce the chance of bacterial infection.
- Antibiotic ointment (such as bacitracin) and a sterile gauze bandage will help to protect the wound from further infection and water loss until a scab forms.

M e d i c a l T r e a t m e n t

Just as at home, the first step is to stop the bleeding.

- If direct pressure is not enough, a blood pressure cuff can help as a temporary measure for cuts on arms and legs.
- Tourniquets are generally not helpful for cuts to the face or body.

Medication to numb the area may be given. Depending on the size and location of the cut, this may be done using various methods:

- Topical medicine
- Direct injection of anesthetic into the wound
- Injection into a regional nerve – called "nerve block" – (for cuts to the finger tip, the nerves at the finger base are often blocked with a series of shots)

Cleaning is often the most important aspect of good wound care.

- This may be done by first washing the adjacent skin with soap and water and removing crusted blood with diluted hydrogen peroxide.
- Next, irrigation by squirting saline at the wound under high pressure is very effective at reducing bacterial contamination in the wound.

Your doctor will decide the best way to repair your wound.

- Some minor cuts can be closed with special adhesive tapes (Steri-Strips) or tissue glue (Dermabond or Indermil). Tissue glue can be used as a barrier against common bacterial microbes. Be sure to inform the doctor if you have any allergies to these adhesive tapes.
- Deeper cuts may need stitches to repair deep structures (such as fascia, the connective tissue envelope around a muscle).
- Stitches to the skin surface can help to stop bleeding, protect underlying tissues, and lessen scarring.

Different bandages are chosen for their different material properties.

- Some materials are better because they won't stick to your cut (Telfa or Vaseline gauze).
- Others are more absorbent, provide needed surface pressure, or help to keep an injury immobile. Pressure bandages or splints may be applied, depending on the underlying injuries.

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For more information, read the complete article, Cuts or Lacerations (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=59283>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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