



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

## Puncture Wound Treatment

### Self-Care at Home

- First, check to see that nothing is left in the wound.
- Check to see if the object that caused the wound is intact. If a piece is missing, it may be stuck in the wound.
- Allow the wound to bleed freely, but if bleeding is heavy or squirting out, apply pressure until it stops.
- If bleeding won't stop, you will need emergency care.
- The basics of wound care
  - Stop the bleeding: Minor puncture wounds and cuts usually stop bleeding on their own. If not, apply gentle pressure with a clean cloth or bandage. If the blood spurts or continues after several minutes of pressure, emergency care is necessary.
  - Clean the wound: First, wash your hands. If your hands are not clean, you may spread bacteria into the wound. Cleanse the wound. Wash with water. You can use a mild soap such as Ivory if the wound is very dirty. If dirt or debris remains in the wound, clean a pair of tweezers with alcohol and remove the dirt. If you cannot get the dirt or debris out, contact your doctor.
  - Protect the wound: An antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin or Polysporin can be used. Apply a thin layer over the wound. This will help coat and protect the wound. Large amounts of ointment are not helpful because they can attract bacteria. Apply the ointment with a clean swab or gauze. Do not apply directly from the tube in order to avoid contamination of the tube. Ointments can be applied up to 3 times a day, but you should always clean the wound before applying ointment.

### Medical Treatment

The wound will be thoroughly cleansed. The doctor may use instruments to look for objects in the wound. You may be given a tetanus shot if more than five years have elapsed since last dose. Antibiotics may be given to people with diabetes, peripheral

vascular disease, contaminated wounds, or deep wounds to the foot. Most healthy people without signs of infection do not require antibiotics.

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For more information, read the complete article, Puncture Wound (<http://www.emedicinehealth.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=58848>) on <http://www.emedicinehealth.com>.

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*This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor.*

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