Wound Care Treatment

- Bleeding can usually be stopped by applying direct pressure to the wound.
- Very large foreign objects stuck in a wound should be stabilized. Do not remove them.
- All wounds require immediate thorough cleansing with fresh tap water.
- Gently scrub the wound with soap and water to remove foreign material. If a syringe is available, it should be used to provide high-pressure irrigation.
- Remove dead tissue from the wound with a sterile scissors or scalpel.
- After cleaning the wound, a topical antibiotic ointment (bacitracin) should be applied 3 times per day.
- Wounded extremities should be immobilized and elevated.
- Puncture wounds are usually not sutured (stitched) unless they involve the face.
- If the wound is clean, the edges can be drawn together with tape. (Do not cover wounds inflicted by animals or that occurred in seawater with tape.)
- Oral antibiotics are usually recommended to prevent infection. If infection develops, continue antibiotics for at least 5 days after all signs of infection have cleared. Inform the doctor of any drug allergy prior to starting any antibiotic. The doctor will prescribe the appropriate antibiotic. Some may cause sensitivity to the sun, so sunscreen (at least SPF 15) is mandatory while taking these antibiotics.
- Pain may be relieved with 1-2 acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 hours, 1-2 ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil) every 6-8 hours, or both.


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