

Skin Wound do's and don'ts

Injuries and accidents happen despite our efforts to keep our children safe. Cuts, bruises and burns can be an inevitable part of childhood. Knowing how to treat skin wounds properly is important to fight off infection.

The American Academy of Pediatrics offers the following advice for treating your child when he or she gets a skin wound.

Burns and Scalds

- Remove the child from contact with the hot object or hot water.
- Remove clothing around the burned area, unless it is firmly stuck to the skin.
- Run cool water over the burned skin until pain stops.
- Do not apply ice, butter, grease, medications or any other ointments to burns.
- Do not break any blisters that form.
- For large or deep burns, call 911 or an emergency number. After stopping and cooling the burn, keep the child warm with a clean sheet and blanket.
- For electrical burns, disconnect the power. Do not touch the victim with your bare hands; pull the victim away from the power source with wooden pole. See a physician for all electrical burns.

Bruises

- Apply cold compresses.
- Call the pediatrician if the child has a crush injury, large bruises, continued pain or swelling.

Cuts

- Wash small cuts with water until clean and apply pressure to stop the bleeding.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment and cover with clean bandage.
- For large, deep or gaping cuts, call the pediatrician because stitches may be needed.

Scrapes

- Rinse scrapes with an antiseptic soap and water to remove dirt and germs. Do not use detergents, alcohol or peroxide.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment and a bandage that will not stick to the wound.

Splinters

- Remove small splinters with tweezers. Wash and clean the area with an antiseptic.
- Call the pediatrician for splinters that you are unable to remove completely.

Puncture Wounds

- Do not remove large objects such as sticks and knives from puncture wounds. Instead, call for emergency medical assistance.
- Call the pediatrician for all puncture wounds.

For all open skin wounds, ask the pediatrician whether the child needs a tetanus booster.