

Bleeding (haemorrhage) can be external and obvious or internal (within the body) and often not seen.

Bleeding is classified according to the type of blood vessel damaged:

- Arterial Bleed - damaged artery; bright red blood; spurting
- Venous Bleed - damaged vein; dark red blood; flowing
- Capillary - tiny blood vessels; bright red blood; oozing

Types of wounds associated with bleeding are:

- Abrasion • Incision • Laceration • Puncture • Embedded object • Tear • Amputation

Minor Skin Injuries: Wash your hands with soap and water before and after.

- Wash dirt away from the wound with clean water.
- Use antiseptic to kill surface bacteria, and rinse off after 5 mins because antiseptics can interfere with the natural healing process.
- Cover with non-stick dressing if necessary

Major External Bleeding:

- The aim is to reduce blood loss from the casualty.
- Direct, sustained pressure is the fastest, easiest, most effective way to stop bleeding.
- Apply direct or indirect pressure on or near the wound as appropriate.

FIRST AID

- Check for Dangers to self, casualty & bystanders.
- Use disposable gloves if available.
- **Direct Pressure Method:**
- Quickly check for embedded objects (pg 13)
- Identify the bleeding point and apply firm direct pressure until bleeding stops.
- Maintain pressure over the wound using hands or pad (sterile dressing, tea towel or handkerchief).
- Bandage firmly to hold pressure pad in place.
- **If bleeding continues** - apply another pad and a tighter bandage.
- Elevate bleeding part, restrict movement, immobilise the part, advise casualty to rest
- Call ☎
- Reassure casualty.
- Monitor vital signs (pg 48, 49)
- Give oxygen if available.
- DO NOT give casualty food, alcohol, medication.
- **If major bleeding continues** - remove all pads to locate a bleeding point, then apply a more direct pressure over the bleeding point.
- Treat for shock (pg 14) if required.



Direct Pressure and Elevation

TOURNIQUET: Used to control life-threatening bleeding (eg traumatic amputation of a limb).

- Use as a **LAST RESORT**.
- Use a wide bandage (>5 cm wide).
- Apply **high** above wound.
- Ensure tourniquet is clearly visible.
- Tighten until bleeding stops.
- Note the time of application; write time of application on casualty.
- Continue to maintain direct pressure over wound.
- DO NOT apply tourniquet over a joint or wound.
- DO NOT remove tourniquet until casualty receives specialist care.