

Nosebleeds

Bleeding from the nose most commonly occurs when tiny blood vessels inside the nostrils are ruptured, either by a blow to the nose, or as a result of sneezing, picking or blowing the nose. Nosebleeds may also occur as a result of high blood pressure.

Your aims To control blood loss. To maintain an open airway.

Treatment Sit the patient down Tilt their head forwards to allow the blood to drain from the nostrils. Ask the patient to breath through their mouth (this will also have a calming effect) and to pinch the soft part of the nose. Reassure and help if necessary. Tell the patient to keep pinching their nose. Advise them not to speak, swallow, cough, spit or sniff because this may disturb blood clots that may have formed in the nose. After 10 minutes, tell the patient to release the pressure. If the bleeding has not stopped, tell her to reapply the pressure for two further periods of 10 minutes. Once the bleeding has stopped and with the patient still leaning forwards, clean around their nose with lukewarm water. Advise the patient to rest quietly for a few hours. Tell them to avoid exertion and in particular, not to blow their nose, because these actions will disturb any clots.

Foreign object in the eye

Usually, such objects can easily be rinsed off. However you must not touch anything that sticks to the eye, penetrates the eyeball, or rests on the coloured part of the eye (iris and pupil) because this may damage the eye. Instead, make sure the patient gets medical attention quickly

Treatment; Your aim is to prevent injury to the eye.

- Sit the patient facing the light.
- Gently separate the eyelids with your finger and thumb.
- Ensure you examine every part of the eye, ask the patient to look up, down, left and right.
If you can see an object on the white of the eye:
- Wash it out with a sterile eye-wash bath or clean water poured from a glass.
- Place the patient's head towards the injured side and place a towel or pad on the shoulder.
- Pour the water from the bridge of the nose allowing it to run through and flush the eye out.
- If this is unsuccessful then lift the object off the white of the eye with a moist swab.
- If this is still unsuccessful then seek medical help.

Objects under the upper eyelid:

- Ask the patient to pull the upper lid down over the lower lid.
- The lower lashes may brush the object clear.

Caution:

- **Do not touch** anything that is sticking to or embedded in the eyeball or the iris, the coloured part of the eye.
- Place an eye pad over the eye.
- Take or send the patient to hospital.

Burns and scalds

Treatment

- Start cooling the burn immediately under running water for at least 10 minutes
- Continue to pour copious amounts of cold water over the burn for at least ten minutes or until the pain is relieved.
- Remove jewellery, watch or clothing from the affected area - unless it is sticking to the skin.
- Cover the burn with clean, non-fluffy material to protect from infection.

If a minor burn is larger than a postage stamp it requires medical attention. All deep burns of any size require urgent hospital treatment.

Bleeding

Minor cuts, scratches and grazes

Treatment

- Wash and dry your own hands.
- Cover any cuts on your own hands and put on disposable gloves.
- Clean the cut, if dirty, under running water. Pat dry with a sterile dressing or clean lint-free material. If possible, raise affected area above the heart.
- Cover the cut temporarily while you clean the surrounding skin with soap and water and pat the surrounding skin dry. Cover the cut completely with a sterile dressing or plaster.

Severe bleeding

Treatment

- Put on disposable gloves.
- Apply direct pressure to the wound with a pad (e.g. a clean cloth) or fingers until a sterile dressing is available.
- Raise and support the injured limb. Take particular care if you suspect a bone has been broken.
- Lay the person down to treat for shock.
- Bandage the pad or dressing firmly to control bleeding, but not so tightly that it stops the circulation to fingers or toes. If bleeding seeps through first bandage, cover with a second bandage. If bleeding continues to seep through bandage, remove it and reapply.
- Treat for shock.
- Call for an ambulance.

Objects in wounds

Where possible, swab or wash small objects out of the wound with clean water. If there is a large object embedded:

Treatment

- Leave it in place.
- Apply firm pressure on either side of the object.
- Raise and support the wounded limb or part.
- Lay the person down to treat for shock.
- Gently cover the wound and object with a sterile dressing.
- Build up padding around the object until the padding is higher than the object, then bandage over the object without pressing on it.
- Depending on the severity of the bleeding, call for an ambulance or take the person to hospital.