



How to Stop Bleeding

Three Methods: [Stopping Minor Bleeding from Small Cuts](#) [Treating Serious Wounds](#) [Internal Bleeding](#)

Bleeding refers to the loss of blood from blood vessels anywhere in the body. If someone has been wounded and is bleeding, it is important to work quickly to control blood loss. In most cases, you should be able to keep the bleeding under control without much difficulty. In more severe cases, however, uncontrolled or severe bleeding can contribute to **shock**, circulatory disruption, or more serious health consequences such as damage to tissues and major organs, which can lead to death. Follow the steps below to control bleeding.

Method
1

Stopping Minor Bleeding from Small Cuts

- 1 Use water.** Running water will not only clean the wound, but help to stop the bleeding. Run cold water over the cut to constrict the blood vessels and stop the bleeding. Doing the same with hot water will cauterize the cut, allowing the blood to clot. Don't use both hot and cold water - just one or the other should do the trick.
 - You can use an ice cube instead of cold water to close off the arteries. Hold the ice to the cut for a few seconds until the wound closes up and stops bleeding.
 - If you have multiple small cuts on your body, taking a hot shower will clean off all the blood and cauterize the multiple gashes concurrently.
- 2 Add vaseline.** As a result of the waxy texture of vaseline, applying a small smear of it to minor cuts will block off the blood flow outside of the skin and give the wound time to clot. You can use regular chapstick if you don't have any plain vaseline on hand.
- 3 Apply white vinegar.** The astringent properties of vinegar help to disinfect and clot small cuts. Dab a bit of white vinegar onto the cut with a cotton ball, and wait for the bleeding to stop.
- 4 Try witch hazel.** Similar to white vinegar, witch hazel acts as a natural astringent great for clotting small cuts. Pour a little over your cut or dab it on with a cotton ball for the same effect.
- 5 Put on some cornstarch.** Sprinkle a bit of cornstarch onto the cut, being careful not to rub it or cause any further abrasions. You can lightly press the powder onto the cut to help expedite the process. When the cut has stopped bleeding, use running water to rinse the cornstarch off.
- 6 Add a spoonful of sugar.** Follow Mary Poppins's advice at pour a little sugar over the cut. The antiseptic qualities of the sugar will help to clean it, while simultaneously aiding the blood clotting process.
- 7 Use spiderwebs.** This is a great option if you are cut while hiking or outdoors. Grab some (spider-free!) spiderwebs and place them over the cut, rolling them up if necessary. The webs will stanch the blood flow and give your cut time to clot internally.^[1]
- 8 Try a styptic pencil.** These waxy pencils were originally made for shaving nicks and razor burn but work great for any small cut. Rub the pencil over your skin and let the mineral astringents it contains go to work. It will sting a bit on contact, but after a few seconds both the pain and bleeding will go away.
- 9 Rub on some antiperspirant.** Similar to a styptic pencil, your deodorant has aluminum chloride which works as an astringent to stop the blood flow. Put some on your finger before smearing it over the cut, or rub the stick directly onto your nick.

- 10 Dab on Listerine.** Originally created as an aftershave, use regular Listerine to help stop blood flow. Pour some directly over the cut or dip a cotton ball into the Listerine and dab it on. You should notice a decrease in blood flow after a minute or two.
- 11 Put on some pepper.** Cayenne pepper will help to seal up your wound fast and stop bleeding. However, this is one of the more painful methods. If you're in a hurry to stop your bleeding and don't mind a little stinging, sprinkle some cayenne pepper over your cut and let it work its magic. When the bleeding stops, rinse it off with a bit of cold water.^[2]
- 12 Use an alum block.** This is a soap-like bar created from minerals which help to stop bleeding. Wet the alum block in water and gently rub it over the cut. There is no need to apply pressure as you place the block over your gash; the minerals will do the work themselves.^[3]
- 13 Take the membrane from an egg.** You know when you crack an egg, the filmy membrane left on the inside of the shell? Well this actually works to seal off cuts and give your body time to clot. Peel the membrane from an egg (try to keep it in as large a piece as possible) and place it over your cut. Within a few seconds you should notice a stoppage in the blood flow.
- 14 Dress the cut.** Apply a sterile bandage or dressing to the wound to help keep out any dirt and stop further bleeding. You can use a simple band-aid or a piece of clean gauze.

Method
2

Treating Serious Wounds

- 1 Lie down.** It will help to lessen the likelihood of shock if you can elevate the legs or position the head lower than the trunk. Check the victim's breathing and circulation before proceeding. See [How to Treat Shock](#) for information about how to recognize and manage symptoms of shock.
- 2 Elevate a wounded limb.** Raising the wounded limb (assuming it is an extremity that is injured) above heart will help to reduce severe bleeding. If you suspect a broken bone, however, do not attempt to move the limb.
- 3 Remove any debris.** Clean up any visible foreign body and dirt, but do not clean the wound thoroughly as this can aggravate the wound.^[4] Your immediate priority is to stop severe bleeding. Cleaning the wound can wait.
- If the foreign object is large however (large piece of glass, knife, or similar) do not remove it. It is most likely stopping a lot of the bleeding itself. Just put pressure and bandage around the object taking care not to push it in further.
- 4 Apply firm pressure directly to the wound until the bleeding stops.** Use a pad of clean gauze, dressing, or clothing. (Even your hand can work if nothing else is available.) Place your hand over the pad and apply firm pressure with fingers or a hand to the wound.
- 5 Apply pressure steadily.** If the injury is on a limb, you can use tape or a cloth wrapped around the wound to maintain pressure (a folded triangular bandage placed over the wound and tied is ideal). For groin or other parts of the body where you cannot wrap the wound, use a heavy pad and keep using your hands to press on the wound.
- 6 Look for seepage from the wound.** Add more gauze or additional bandages if the original soaks through. Do not over-wrap it, however, as increased bulk risks reducing pressure on the wound. If you suspect the bandage is not working, remove the bandage and pad and reassess the application.^[5] If the bleeding appears controlled, maintain pressure until you are sure the bleeding has stopped or medical help has arrived.
- 7 Use pressure points if necessary.** If you cannot stop bleeding by pressure alone, combine using direct pressure to the wound with pressure to one of these pressure points. Use your fingers to press the blood vessel against the bone. The most commonly needed are described below:^[6]
- The brachial artery - For wounds on the lower arm. Runs on the inside of the arm between the elbow and

armpit.

- The femoral artery. For thigh wounds. Runs along the groin near the bikini line.^[7]
- The popliteal artery - For wounds on the lower leg. This is found behind the knee.

8 Continue applying pressure until the bleeding stops or help arrives.

- Use a tourniquet if the bleeding is life threatening. **Tourniquets** usually stop bleeding instantly if applied correctly, but incorrect tourniquet use can harm the patient.

9 Monitor the breathing.

Check that the bandages are not too tight - if the victim has cold, pale skin, toes or fingers that do not restore to normal color after compression, or the victim complains of numbness or tingling, it is probable that the bandaging is too tight.^[8]

Method
3

Internal Bleeding

- 1 Call an ambulance immediately.** Get the bleeding victim to hospital as quickly as possible. Internal bleeding cannot be treated at home and can only be dealt with by a doctor.
- 2 Relax in a comfortable position.** Keep the victim calm, resting comfortably, and prevent further injury. Don't stress movement, and remain laying down if you're able.
- 3 Check for breathing.** Monitor the victim's airway, breathing and circulation. If there is any, attend to external bleeding.
- 4 Maintain normal body temperature.** Keep from getting too hot or too cold by applying rags dipped in water and placed over the forehead.

Community Q&A

W/ should I do to a small cut on the eyebrow that has been slowly bleeding for 10 hours so far?

Jonas DeMuro,
M.D.

A wound that continues to bleed should be closed with sutures. In addition, the face is quite vascular, and that is a cosmetically sensitive area, so it should be seen and treated by a medical professional who can assess how deep the wound is, and determine the source of the ongoing bleeding.

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Chat with this expert

How do I stop bleeding from a tooth extraction?

Jonas DeMuro,
M.D.

You can try biting on a piece of cotton gauze, or a tea bag. If the bleeding persists beyond 20-30 minutes, or the bleeding is pulsatile or severe, then contact the dentist that did the extraction without delay.

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Chat with this expert

What should I do if my wound has been bleeding heavily for longer than 5 days?

wikiHow
Contributor

Go to a doctor. If it is a small wound that is bleeding unnecessarily after proper treatment, then a doctor should be notified after 24 to 48 hours. If the wound is large enough to not stop bleeding, then you might need stitches or/and medical attention other than first-aid.

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What if you have no idea on how deep the cut is?

wikiHow
Contributor

As long as you have called the ambulance and you keep putting pressure on it so that the blood won't flow out you should be fine. It is the best someone not trained to treat people can do, and it's way better than doing nothing.

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What if the cut pushes up a small sliver of skin on my finger?wikiHow
Contributor

The best thing to do would be to press the flap of skin back down over the cut and cover it with a Band-Aid or other sort of bandage.

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What happens if I cut a vein?

Nattie Jim

Have a medical professional look at the wound as soon as possible.

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How can I stop bleeding if I get a cut while taking blood thinners?wikiHow
Contributor

If you're taking an anticoagulant, it may take more time and pressure to stop the bleeding; but the method is still the same. If you're treating someone else, look for a medical bracelet or necklace that indicates he/she is taking an anticoagulant.

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Should I use Super Glue on cuts as they do in the ER?wikiHow
Contributor

Yes, the glue does seal the edges. However, this should only be a short term fix for a wound that has been thoroughly cleaned. Otherwise, you could be sealing in debris and bacteria.

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My friend was wounded inside his nose and after an hour his nose and mouth are still bleeding, what should I do?wikiHow
Contributor

Apply pressure to the wound. If it goes on for too long (use the advice in the article to help you determine this), see a doctor.

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What do I do if your nail is bleeding?wikiHow
Contributor

Apply pressure and bandage. Seek medical attention if you cannot get it to stop bleeding.

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Can you answer these readers' questions?
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On **How to Care for a Weeping Cherry Tree**, a reader asks:

When is the best time to transplant a tree?

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On **How to Get Netflix**, a reader asks:

Is there a phone number for assistance?

Your answer...

Reply

On **How to Write a Character Reference**, a reader asks:

How do I write a reference letter for someone a custody case

Your answer...

Reply

Tips

- When applying pressure to a bleeding wound, do not move the dressing to determine if bleeding has stopped. Instead, continue to apply pressure.
- If available, put on rubber or latex gloves before coming in contact with others' blood. You can even use clean plastic bags to protect your hands.
- For serious bleeding, call for help, or ask someone else to call for help, as soon as possible.
- If you're taking an anticoagulant, it may take more time and pressure to stop the bleeding. If you're treating someone else, look for a medical bracelet or necklace that indicates he/she is anticoagulated.
- Arterial bleeding requires more specific pressure on the bleeding vessel than the generalized pressure used for venous-type bleeding. This may require finger-tip pressure at the point where the bleeding is coming from – not a generalized pressure on the wound itself. This is due to the higher pressure of the arterial system. In the case of arterial bleeding, seek professional medical help as soon as possible.
- If the bleeding is not bad, just clean the cut with water and then put a band-aid on it.
- If a person has suffered severe abdominal injuries, do not reposition organs. Cover them with a dressing until the person can be moved by people with emergency medical training.^[4]

Warnings

- To prevent the transmission of disease between you and the victim, it is important to take specific precautions:^[9]
 - Use a barrier between the bleeding and your skin. Wear gloves (preferably non-latex since some people may have an allergic reaction to latex), or use a clean, folded cloth.
 - Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water after attending to a bleeding victim. Use a hand basin, not one usually used for food preparation.
 - Do not eat, drink, or touch your nose/mouth/eyes until you have thoroughly washed your hands after treating a bleeding victim.
- It is not generally recommended that you use a **tourniquet**. However, in the case of severe injuries or severed limbs, it is possible that you may need to use one to save a life. Understand that this may very well cost the person a limb.^[10]

Sources and Citations

1. <http://www.myhomeremedies.com/topic.cgi?topicid=28>
2. <http://www.artofmanliness.com/2012/10/16/beyond-toilet-paper-how-to-treat-shaving-nicks-and-cuts/>
3. <http://www.symptomfind.com/health/stop-shaving-cut-bleeding/>

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