Vancouver CoastalHealth

Providence HEALTH CARE

Promoting wellness. Ensuring care. How you want to be treated.

Emergency Department

Wound Care (Non-sutured)

General Information

Cuts, scratches, scrapes and bruises are types of wounds that happen from time to time. Most cuts and scratches and scrapes are superficial and do not require sutures (stitches). Bruises form when a blow breaks small blood vessels in the skin and/or deeper tissue, but the skin is not cut.

Instructions

These types of injuries will heal on their own.

For Cuts/Scratches/Scrapes

- Apply pressure for 20 minutes to stop any bleeding.
- Clean the wound once a day with warm water.
- Do not use alcohol on open wounds. It stings and damages the tissue.
- Do not pick at the scab(s), let it fall off on its own.
- Keep the wounds clean and dry until it begins to heal.
- If you have a bandage, change the bandage daily, or when the bandage is dirty.

For Bruises

- Use ice packs. Wrap the ice pack in a towel and apply for 10 to 15 minutes. The ice will help reduce the bleeding under the skin. It will also help with the pain.
- Elevate the injured part. If it is a limb, put it up on a pillow or footstool.

See your Family Doctor if any of the Following Develop:

- The bleeding doesn't stop after you have applied pressure over the area of the cut for 20 minutes.
- You see signs of infection (redness or swelling around the wound, increasing pain or tenderness, white, yellow or green discharge (pus)).
- The wound doesn't heal within 20 days.
- A fever.
- Red streaks on the skin around the cut or scrape.

For more information or questions contact HealthLinkBC at 811.

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