

Session Notes: Know how to treat minor cuts, scratches and grazes

For most people, small cuts and grazes will quickly stop bleeding without further treatment. However, the skin protects the body against infection, so any break in the skin will allow germs to get into the body. Germs are tiny organisms, too small to see without a microscope but flies or our unwashed hands move them around. If they land on an open wound, they can cause infection.

When treating even minor wounds, we therefore need to prevent it from becoming infected and to control the bleeding.

What to do:

If possible, help the casualty to sit down
Put on disposable gloves or wash your hands thoroughly
Raise the injured part
If possible rinse the wound under cold-water

Clean the wound:

Use a fresh swab or wipe for each stroke.
Clean around the edge
Pick out, with great care, any loose foreign matter – such as gravel.

Dry the wound:

Taking care not to disturb the wound, gently dab dry the surrounding area.

Cover the Wound:

For a small cut or graze use a plaster to cover the injury, making sure that the sterile part of the plaster is not touched. Be aware that some people are allergic to plasters, so check before treating any casualties and don't use plasters.