

Severe bleeding



IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE.

DRSABCD Danger ► Response ► Send for help ► Airway ► Breathing ► CPR ► Defibrillation

The DRSABCD Action Plan is the first step when providing first aid. Use this to assess the immediate situation.

WARNING

- Any severe bleeding should be stopped as soon as possible
- DO NOT give the patient anything to eat or drink
- Wear gloves, if possible, to prevent infection.
- If an object is embedded in or protruding from a wound, apply pressure on either side of the wound and place pads around the object before bandaging.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

As well as the obvious sign of blood coming from a wound, signs and symptoms of severe bleeding include:

- weak, rapid pulse
- pale, cool, moist skin
- pallor, sweating
- rapid, gasping breathing
- restlessness
- nausea
- thirst
- faintness, dizziness or confusion
- loss of consciousness.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Help the patient to lie down, particularly if the bleeding is severe.
- 3 Remove or cut the patient's clothing to expose the wound.
- 4 Ask the patient to apply direct pressure over the wound, or as close to the point of the bleeding as possible. If the patient is unable to apply pressure, use a pad or your hands.
- 5 Squeeze the wound edges together if possible.
- 6 Apply a pad over the wound if not already in place.
- 7 Secure the pad by bandaging over it. Ensure the pad remains over the wound.
- 8 If bleeding is still not controlled, leave the initial pad in place and apply a second pad and secure it with a bandage.
- 9 If bleeding continues through the second pad, replace the second pad leaving the first pad in place, and rebandage.
- 10 Do not give the severely bleeding patient any food or drink, and **call triple zero (000)** for an ambulance.
- 11 Check every 15 minutes that the bandages are not too tight and that there is circulation below the wound.
- 12 Continue to check the patient's breathing.

If the bleeding can not be controlled, consider applying a tourniquet. Only apply a tourniquet if bleeding can not be controlled by direct pressure, the equipment is available, and the first aider is trained in the use of this equipment.

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