

Laceration/Puncture Wound

What is it?



- **Laceration** – an irregular tear or wound caused by blunt trauma, a cut, torn or jagged wound (a blow, collision or fall), a tear in the skin, if the laceration bleeds with no sign of stopping it needs to be closed with stitches
- **Puncture Wound** caused by an object puncturing the skin, such as a needle or nails; a blow from a sharp object sustained in an accident or a fall

Signs and Symptoms:

- **Symptoms**- minimal bleeding, minimal pain, may include numbness and swelling
 - **Bleeding**- stopped with direct pressure and time, rest and elevation are helpful
 - **Bruising**- may be due to blood clotting under the skin surface, may have some swelling; apply a ice pack and elevate the area above the level of the heart, if not improved within 24 hours see your health care provider



Recommendations:

- **Clean with**- gentle antibacterial soap and water to reduce the chance of bacterial infection, may use an antibiotic ointment and a sterile gauze bandage or a band aid for protection of infection; always change the dressing, clean the site and reapply the ointment; clean 3 to 4 times/day

What can I do?

- **See your Health Care Provider**- may want to get a tetanus booster (every 10 years); if there are red streaks or drainage around the laceration
 - **Stitches**- keep the site clean, elevate the site for 24 to 48 hours to reduce pain and swelling and helps healing, take medication as prescribed, return to health care provider to change the stitches in 7 to 10 days or as directed; apply Vitamin E once the stitches are removed as well as massaging the scar to minimize scarring; stitches reduce scarring and keeps the wound from becoming infected; some wounds heal better without stitches

