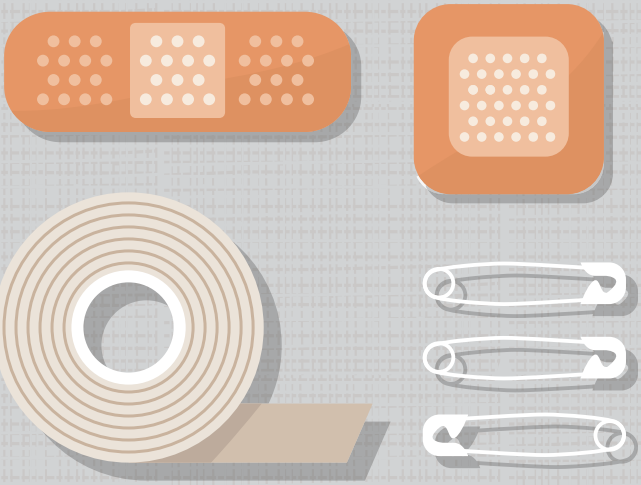
EASING THE PAIN OF SKIN INJURIES

Typical sports skin injuries include lacerations, incisions, blisters, abrasions, avulsions and punctures. Proper care speeds acute skin injury healing and lowers the risk of infection and adverse reactions.

SKIN INJURY CARE

See a physician promptly for a deep wound needing sutures or staples, heavy contamination, tendon or nerve damage, warmth, drainage, pain, a rash or slow healing.



CLEANSING AND DRESSINGS

- Promptly rinse the wound and nearby skin thoroughly with saline or tap water.
- Do not scrub or swab: this does not reduce bacteria and can harm healing skin.
- Use wound antiseptics carefully, as they can be toxic to skin tissue.
- After the first cleaning, clean the wound again only if it is visibly contaminated or infected.
- Remove any debris before applying a dressing.
  - An athletic trainer or other health care provider should debride wounds with large amounts of debris.
- Keep the wound covered until it has fully healed.
- Use nonocclusive dressings (sterile gauze, nonadherent pads, adhesive strips and patches) or occlusive ones (films, foams and hydrocolloids). Occlusive dressings from pharmacies are preferred: they provide the best environment for healing.

ONGOING CARE AND REVIEW

- Watch for infection signs:
  - Fever, pain, swelling, warmth or slow wound healing
- Check for adverse reactions to certain cleansing solutions, topical antimicrobial agents and dressings:
  - Rash, white discoloration, tenderness or a burning feeling
- Have an athletic trainer or sports medicine provider check the wound daily as it heals, to confirm proper healing and dressing.

Reference: National Athletic Trainers' Association
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