Northern Arizona University / Facility Services
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Flagstaff AZ 86001

#266169

CONSTRUCTION SS
Safety Services Company

Worksite: _____ Instructor: _____ Date/Time: _____

Topic C005: First Aid for Lacerations

Introduction: A laceration is usually caused by an accidental cut, tear, gouge, or scrape of the skin. The severity of the laceration can vary from a minor cut or scrape to a gaping wound. On the more serious end of the spectrum, improper attention to such injuries can lead to severe blood loss and risk of death. It is important that employees recognize the degrees of severity and understand the different corresponding treatment processes.

Assess the Situation:
Put on any necessary personal protective equipment, such as latex gloves, in order to address risks associated with blood borne pathogens. ***Determine the cause*** of the injury and eliminate any hazards that may affect you as the first aid provider. ***Do not become a victim yourself***, leave rescue to trained personnel. ***If the victim*** is not in any danger, do not move them. ***Treat life threatening situations first:*** severe bleeding, cardiac arrest, or if the victim has stopped breathing. ***If you are alone,*** treat any life threatening injuries first, then go for help. **Call 911 if possible.** ***If you are not alone,*** send someone for help immediately.

For minor lacerations where serious blood loss is not a risk, the wound(s) should be cleaned as thoroughly as possible, antibacterial ointment applied, and the appropriate dressing to cover the wound. The victim should be taken to a medical facility if sutures are needed to close the wound.

When a severe laceration injury occurs and serious blood loss is apparent, the person giving first aid must assess the injury to determine the measures required to control external bleeding. The risk of blood-loss fatality is increased if gross bleeding is not controlled.

Many laceration injuries occur because the employee was not wearing proper personal protection equipment. Reduce the risk of injury and preemptively address safety hazards by wearing the right equipment for the job.

The three primary types of external bleeding are capillary bleeding, venous bleeding, and arterial bleeding.
Capillary Bleeding is caused by abrasions that have scraped open the tiny capillaries just below the skin's surface. Capillary bleeding usually slows or stops before any serious blood loss occurs.
Venous Bleeding is from deeper within the tissue and is usually controlled with a small amount of direct pressure.
Venous bleeding is usually not life-threatening unless the injury is severe and/or blood loss is not controlled.
Arterial Bleeding is caused by an injury that has lacerated an artery. This is the most important and most difficult type of blood loss to control. Even a small, deep arterial puncture wound can produce life-threatening arterial blood loss.

The person rendering first aid should control bleeding according to the following steps:
Direct Pressure – Apply firm pressure to the site of bleeding. This is accomplished by placing a sterile dressing directly over the laceration and applying pressure.
Elevation – Elevate the extremity with the laceration, using gravity to reduce blood loss. Caution must be exercised when elevating an extremity when fractures or dislocations are suspected.
Pressure Points – Blood loss may also be controlled by applying deep pressure to the main artery nearest the wound. There are several primary pressure points that one should become familiar with such as the femoral artery in the groin, or the brachial artery on the inside of the upper arm (never apply direct pressure to the neck).

Controlling blood loss is an absolute priority, as fatality can occur within minutes depending on the severity of the wound. Prioritize the blood loss and relocate the victim to a medical facility as soon as possible.. If the person has been impaled by a foreign object, do not remove the object, leave this matter for the emergency medical personnel to handle.

Conclusion: Always be aware of your surroundings and take a few extra minutes out of each day to inspect your work area. This includes machines, tools, or whatever else could cause injury. A calm, trained, rapid response can save someone's life.

Employee Attendance: *(Names or signatures of personnel who are attending this meeting)*

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