

Pretibial Lacerations (cuts on the shin)

Introduction

A pretibial laceration is a type of cut which is usually caused by knocking your leg on something and because the skin is thin it tears, often in a 'V' or 'C' shaped cut.

The cut on your leg needs special care and can take two months or possibly even longer, to heal.

Treatment

Because the skin is thin, we do not use stitches to close this type of wound, as this would damage the skin further. Instead, we use paper stitches called Steristrips or a specialist dressing. A bandage, knee to toe, will then be applied. The function of the bandage is to ensure that the cut will heal as quickly as possible by maintaining a good blood supply to the wound and prevent swelling.

Advice

Do

- Rest at least 2 or 3 times a day for a half hour period by sitting or lying down with your legs higher than your bottom.
- Keep the bandage in place until your next dressing is carried out and do not remove it at night.
- Keep yourself mobile and walking around as usual.
- Keep your leg elevated whenever you are sitting.
- Take tablets such as Ibuprofen or Paracetamol (both available from pharmacists) to relieve the pain.

Don't

- Get your bandage wet.
- Stand for a long time in one position.

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Go to your GP or return to the Minor Injury Unit if:

- Your leg bleeds heavily, soaking the dressing thoroughly.
- Your toes become very swollen.
- Your leg becomes increasingly painful.
- You are worried about your leg for any reason at all.

Please contact your GP or NHS111 for any queries or concerns.

If you would like this information in another format or language, please contact the Your Experience Team on freephone 0800 694 5530. Alternatively you can email wcnt.youreexperience@nhs.net

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