

Typical Symptoms and First Aid for Hemophilia

Students with hemophilia will not “bleed out” from a cut or scrape. Internal bleeding is a much greater risk for them. School healthcare providers should work with families and HTC staff to develop a care plan specific to each student. See National Hemophilia Foundation’s guide to [identifying bleeding events](#).

♦ **Bruises** are very common, and students may not know how they occurred. Bruises may have “knots” or lumps in the center of them from accumulated blood.

- Apply ice on a new bruise; and, flexible ice packs (not hard ones) are better
- Watch to ensure bruise is not spreading
- Consider further medical attention if the bruise is associated with swelling, numbness, or a tingling feeling; this could mean that leaking blood is putting pressure on the nerves and blood vessels

♦ **Joint Bleeds** can occur without injury or from trauma, such as a fall or twist. *They are usually not visible immediately*. Instead, over hours, blood seeps into a joint space, like a knee, ankle, or hip ([see visual description](#)). Students may experience tingling, bubbling, decreased range of motion, or stiffness. The student may favor one arm or leg over the other. Listen to students. If not treated promptly, heat, swelling, pain, immobility, and permanent joint damage can occur.

- RICE: Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation
- Flexible ice packs that conform to joints are better
- Contact parents/caregivers promptly
- Factor treatment should be initiated as soon as possible

♦ **Mouth Bleeds** can occur because of things like loose teeth or a bite to the tongue. Mouth bleeds are often hard to stop because saliva breaks down clots.

- Contact parents/caregivers if these occur
- Ice, popsicles, and other cooling methods can reduce bleeding time
- Supplemental medication (e.g. Amicar) to stabilize clots may be warranted

♦ **Nose Bleeds** are common and can usually be treated with typical first aid.

- Position child sitting straight ahead with head upright
- Press the sides of the nose together firmly, you may have to hold pressure for five to twenty minutes for the bleeding to stop
- If pressure does not work, try putting an ice pack over the bridge of the nose; the cold will help close the blood vessels
- Contact parents/caregivers if these occur; contact parents/caregivers for further instructions if bleeding has not stopped after 20 minutes

♦ **Scrapes and Cuts** are usually treated with typical first aid procedures.

- Apply pressure and elevation
- Ice can reduce bleeding time
- Supplemental medication (e.g. Amicar) to stabilize clots may be warranted
- If the laceration is deep enough to require stitches, the child should be sent with factor for emergency care

♦ **Head, Eye, Neck, and Abdomen** injuries can be life threatening.

- Call parents/caregivers and 911 immediately
- If factor is kept at school, this should accompany the student for emergency transport
- The [standard emergency protocol](#) for patients with hemophilia is to ensure that *they receive factor before completing any diagnostic tests*