What is Von Willebrand Disease?

Von Willebrand disease (VWD) is the most common inherited bleeding disorder. It is a lifelong condition that affects the blood’s ability to clot. VWD is not contagious, and there is no cure.

Students with VWD:

- **May be missing some of a blood protein (Type I VWD), may have a defective blood protein (Type II VWD), or may be missing most of a blood protein (Type III VWD)** that helps blood clot normally; the missing or defective protein is Von Willebrand Factor and is also called a “clotting factor”– or just “factor”

- **Receive care in a comprehensive Hemophilia Treatment Center (HTC)** like students with hemophilia

- **Bleed longer** than other students from cuts or scrapes, **not faster**

- **Bruise easily**, will have more bruises than other students, and may not even know where their bruises come from

- **May have frequent or prolonged nosebleeds or mouth bleeds**; and, girls with VWD may have heavy menstrual periods

- **Are usually treated at home** with nasal spray or oral medication so students are typically not seen by a physician each time they need treatment

- **Should avoid aspirin or NSAIDs** (like Advil or Aleve) because these medications increase bleeding

- **Vary in severity**, based on the type of VWD that they have. (Students with Type III VWD can bleed without injury, and their symptoms more closely resemble students with hemophilia; please consult the “What is Hemophilia” sheet for more information)