# Puncture Wound

A puncture wound is an injury that extends through all layers of the skin and into the *subcutaneous* tissue. This is the tissue just beneath the skin. Puncture wounds become easily infected because they often put germs into place (*innoculate bacteria*) beneath the skin. This makes it almost impossible for your caregiver to adequately clean the wound. This is especially true if you have stepped on a nail and it has passed through a dirty shoe.

A dressing, depending on the location of the wound, may have been applied. This may be changed once per day or as instructed. If the dressing sticks, it may be soaked off with soapy water or hydrogen peroxide.

## HOME CARE INSTRUCTIONS

- If your caregiver has given you a follow-up appointment, it is very important to keep that appointment. Not keeping the appointment could result in a chronic or permanent injury, pain, and disability. If there is any problem keeping the appointment, you must call back to this facility for assistance.

Only take over-the-counter or prescription medicines for pain, discomfort, or fever as directed by your caregiver.

**You might need a tetanus shot now if:**

- You have no idea when you had the last one.
- You have never had a tetanus shot before.
- Your wound had dirt in it.
- If you need a tetanus shot, ***and you choose not to get one***, there is a rare chance of getting tetanus. Sickness from tetanus can be serious.

*If you got a tetanus shot, your arm may swell, get red and warm to the touch at the shot site. This is common and not a problem.*

## SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF:

- There is redness, swelling, or increasing pain in the wound.
- You notice a foul smell coming from the wound or dressing.
- Pus is coming from the wound.
- There is increasing pain in the wound.
- You are treated with an antibiotic for infection, but it does not seem to be getting better.
- You notice something in the wound like rubber from your shoe, cloth, or other object.
- You or your child has an oral temperature above 102° F (38.9° C).
- Your baby is older than 3 months with a rectal temperature of 100.5º F (38.1° C) or higher for more than 1 day.

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