

Genital Injury - Female

Definition

- Most genital injuries in girls are a bruise or small cut on the outer labia.
- The vagina, hymen and urethra are protected by the labia. They are usually not harmed.

Health Information

Symptoms

- Small cuts and scrapes in the genital area can bleed more than other areas of the body.
- Even minor injuries can be quite painful.
- Minor cuts, scrapes, bruising or swelling of the labia heal quickly.

Causes

- The most common cause of genital injuries is falling on an object that is being straddled. This is often called a "straddle injury."
- Examples are playground equipment, crossbars of a bike, side of a bathtub, or a fence.
- Sometimes an injury can happen from putting an object in the vagina. Young girls may do this during normal exploration of their bodies. Common objects are toilet paper, crayons or beads.
- If you are concerned your child's genital injury could be related to abuse, please contact your doctor.

Care Advice

1. Key Points

- Most injuries to the genital area are scrapes, cuts and bruises on the labia.
- They heal with simple home care and time.
- Here is some home care advice that should help.

2. Bleeding - How to Stop

- For any bleeding, apply direct pressure for 10 minutes with a sterile gauze.
- Cuts in the genital area can ooze blood. Reason: the area has a rich blood supply.
- Because of this rich blood supply, wounds in this area also heal fast.

3. Cut or Scrape Treatment

- Wash the wound with soap and water.
- If there is dirt, wash away gently with a washcloth.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment (OTC) 2 times per day.
- For large scrapes or cuts, cover with a Band-Aid. Change daily, or if it gets wet.
- Getting urine on the scrape or cut may sting. Passing urine while in a tub of warm water usually helps.

4. Pain Medicine

- For pain relief, give acetaminophen every 4 hours or ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed (See Dosage table).

5. **Sitz Baths**

- Soak the genital area in a basin or bathtub of warm water for 10 minutes.
- Add some baking soda to the water.
- This will soothe pain.
- Repeat this twice a day for 2 days.

6. **Use Heat After 48 Hours**

- If pain lasts over 2 days, put heat on the sore area. Reason: this will speed healing.
- Use a heat pack, heating pad or warm wet washcloth.
- Do this for 10 minutes 3 times per day.
- Caution: avoid burns.

7. **What to Expect**

- Wounds in the genital area heal within 1 week.
- Pain will improve with time.
- Minor wounds in this area do not cause scars or long term health problems.

Call Your Doctor If

- Passing urine becomes difficult
- Pain lasts over 7 days
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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