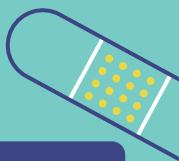


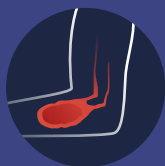
What you need to know about wounds

Wounds can get worse quickly and lead to life-threatening infections in your blood. **Tell a trusted healthcare provider or harm reduction worker about your wound, no matter how small it is.** They can help you take care of your wound or figure out when to seek medical help.



Get medical care if your wound has any of the

S.T.O.P. SIGNS



Size, Shape or Streaks

- gets bigger (trace the outside of the reddened area with a marker to watch for this)
- swollen (puffy)
- edges are red or bleeding
- red streaks (painful reddish lines coming from wound or red stripes up the skin)



Temperature

- feels warm or hot to touch
- you have a fever



Odour

- smells bad or different



Pain or Pus

- hurts more
- liquid or green/yellow pus

Your health matters. You deserve respectful care.

Let your healthcare provider or harm reduction worker know if you go to the hospital.

What causes a wound?

A wound or skin infection can happen when bacteria get into your body through a break in the skin. These bacteria can be on your skin, in your mouth, in used harm reduction supplies or in your drugs.

Using drugs or even small cuts can sometimes lead to wounds.

Tips to help you take care of your wound:



Always wash your hands with soap and water before and after you take care of your wound.

If that's not possible, use alcohol swabs, hand sanitizer or sanitary wipes to clean your hands or wear new gloves.



Don't use alcohol (swabs or liquid) or hydrogen peroxide to clean your wound. They can damage healing tissue. Clean your wound with water.



Keep your wound covered with a clean bandage or cloth. Change the bandage if it gets wet or dirty.



Avoid picking at your wound, injecting into your wound or draining an abscess yourself. This can introduce new bacteria.



For smaller and closed abscesses, try using a warm compress. This can help it drain on its own.

If you use drugs, try to use new supplies every time.

If you inject drugs, clean the injection site with an alcohol swab and allow it to dry before injecting.

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