Forsyth R-3 School District

Traumatic Blood Loss Protocol

According to the American Red Cross and the national "STOP THE BLEED" protocols, severe traumatic bleeding requires immediate, life-saving action. Actions include call 911, apply firm and constant direct pressure, and utilize a tourniquet or wound packing for critical extremity injuries.

The Forsyth School District is trained, will follow, and encourages these step-by-step measures:

Life-threatening bleeding means blood that spurts, pools on the ground, soaks through clothing, or won't stop. For severe arm or leg bleeding, don't delay: go straight to a tourniquet (Step 4).

1 Assess the Scene and Call 911

- **Prioritize safety:** Ensure the scene is safe for both you and the victim.
- **Call for help:** Dial 911 immediately or instruct a specific bystander to do so, and locate a Bleeding Control Kit (located at the 5 locations on campus next to the AEDs).
- Give dispatch the campus address and exact location, and send someone to meet responders at the entrance.
- Contact the School Nurse Office: **ext. 331 or 385**.

2 Apply Direct Pressure

- Put on gloves from the kit if available.
- Place a sterile dressing (or a clean cloth/shirt) directly over the wound.
- Push down as hard as you can using both hands.
- **Hold continuously:** Do not lift the dressing to check the wound, even if blood soaks through. Add another layer of dressing or cloth on top and continue pressing.

3 Pack the Wound (for deep wounds)

- If the wound is deep (e.g., in the neck, shoulder, groin, or armpit) and direct pressure alone isn't stopping the bleeding, tightly pack sterile gauze directly into the wound cavity until it is full.
- Continue to apply manual, direct pressure over the packed wound until emergency services arrive. Hold for at least 3 minutes after packing.

4 Apply a Tourniquet (for arms and legs)

- Apply a commercial tourniquet 2 to 3 inches above the bleeding site (between the wound and the heart), on bare skin. If unsure where to place it, go high on the limb.
- Never place a tourniquet directly over a joint.
- Tighten the rod ("windlass rod") until the bleeding completely stops, then secure the rod in the clip. This will hurt, and that is expected.
- If bleeding continues, apply a second tourniquet above the first.
- Note the time the tourniquet was applied, and write it on the tourniquet or the person. Never remove a tourniquet once it is in place.

5 Treat for Shock

- If the person is conscious, help them lie flat on their back.
- Elevate their legs about 12 inches if no head, neck, spinal, or leg injuries are suspected.
- Keep the person warm by placing a blanket or coat under and over them.
- Do not give them anything to eat or drink.
- Stay with the person until EMS takes over.

Bleeding Control Kit locations (next to the AEDs)

Nurse Office | Main Gym Tunnel | Baseball Concession Stand | Indoor Turf Entry | Alt School

Learn more

This was adapted from the American Red Cross Traumatic Blood Loss Protocol: Bleeding (Life-Threatening External) | Red Cross Information regarding the Stop the Bleed Coalition (stopthebleedcoalition.org)

This page is a quick reference and does not replace hands-on training. Ask the School Nurse Office about staff training.