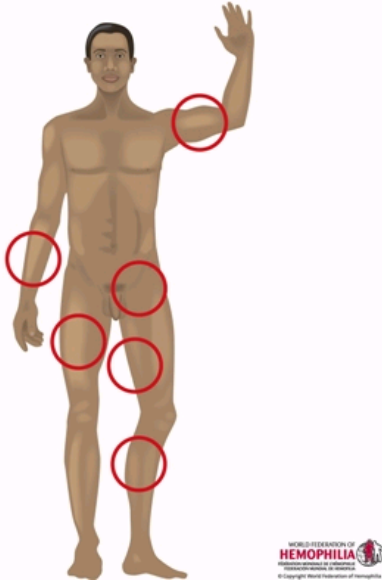




Bleeds and bruises



Joint and muscle bleeds

Having a bleed is an unfortunate fact of having a bleeding disorder. Even if you are on regular prophylaxis, you may get 'breakthrough' bleeds.

How will you know? Most people say they can tell if they're having a bleed. The area feels tingly, gets warm and usually swells up. It can also be really painful.

'Mucous membrane' bleeds - what are those?

This is another name for bleeds in your nose or mouth. Both of these can look very messy, as the blood mixes with saliva or goes on your bedclothes. If it carries on for over two hours you should think about home treatment or a visit to your Centre.

Tip - sucking ice or an ice lolly can help stop mouth bleeds.

Nose bleeds can be triggered if it's very dry or if you sneeze or blow your nose. Tilt your head **forward** and pinch the bridge of the nose firmly for up to 20 minutes. If this doesn't work, try holding an ice pack over your nose. Keeping the inside of your nose moist with a spray can also help if it's very dry.

Cuts & scrapes

These should be OK with normal precautions like washing the skin, pressing down firmly on the cut, and applying a clean bandage or plaster.

Bruises

Bruises are another annoying fact of life with a bleeding disorder. Look out for ones which are very hard or lumpy as they may need treatment. You can also draw a line round your bruise with a marker - this will show you if it's getting bigger and needs treatment. Some people say that arnica cream helps their bruises clear up.

Here's a question and the answer our nurse gave.

Q: I have VWD and over the last couple of months I've noticed that I am bruising even more than normal. Should I be getting worried, or is this to be expected with going through puberty?

A: If you suddenly start bruising a lot more than usual it could be a sign of another illness. However it could also be the changes in your body making you a bit more clumsy than usual - you might not even remember bumping yourself. The bruises to worry about are muscle bruises that are red, painful and/or getting bigger in size. You should always get help for these. Ask your Centre if you have any worries about bruising.

What is serious?

Some bleeds in your head, throat or abdomen can be very serious. Look out for headache, vomiting, sleepiness, unsteadiness, vision problems, vomiting or coughing blood, difficulty swallowing, going pale and weak, or seeing blood when you go to the toilet. If any of these happen, contact your Centre right away.

Pain

It sometimes hurts when you have a bleed or bruise. Remember you should never take aspirin or anything that has aspirin in it (like Alka-Seltzer) and you shouldn't take ibuprofen unless your centre has said it's OK. Usually paracetamol is OK for people with bleeding disorders. If it's really bad your doctor may give you something stronger.

Find some tips on coping with pain from the [Haemophilia Plus website](#).

[Or download our factsheet on Pain.](#)

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