



Haemophilia

What is Haemophilia?



Charlie aged 13, severe haemophilia.

Haemophilia is a bleeding disorder which means that people bleed for longer than normal.

Haemophilia can be **mild**, **moderate**, or **severe**, depending on how much factor you have in your blood.

Cuts and grazes aren't usually a problem as pressure and a plaster are usually enough to stop bleeding. The main problem is internal bleeding into joints, muscles and soft tissues. Haemophilia does not mean people bleed *more* than anyone else, but it means that they bleed *for longer*.

People with haemophilia do not have enough of one of the clotting factors that are necessary to stop bleeding. About 8,000 people are living with haemophilia in the UK. There are two types of haemophilia, the most common being haemophilia A, in which Factor VIII (eight) is lacking and haemophilia B, where Factor IX (nine) is lacking.

You might sometimes hear about 'haemophilia C'. This is a shortage of Factor XI and is quite rare.

How do you know?

If there is haemophilia in the family, you will often be diagnosed when you're born.

However, one in three people with haemophilia didn't have it in the family beforehand. In this case you might have had a lot of bruises and nose bleeds when you were little. It takes some blood tests to say for sure if you have haemophilia. If you are more mildly affected, you might not get diagnosed for a few years.