Resource for Controlling Bleeding, Preventing or Controlling Shock, and Treating Burns

This resource shows the general steps for controlling bleeding, for preventing or controlling shock, and for treating burns. For more details, refer to the associated FSTS task or to TRADOC Pam 600-4, *IET Soldier's Handbook*, 1 October 1999, available on Army Knowledge Online (AKO), https://www.us.army.mil/suite/portal/index.jsp.

**General Steps to Control Bleeding, Prevent or Control Shock, and Treat Burns**

Following are the major steps for this task:

1. Apply a field dressing.
   - Do not touch the sterile side of the dressing.
   - Apply manual pressure.
   - Elevate the wound.

2. Apply a pressure dressing.

3. Apply a tourniquet. Use it *only* when both of the following conditions exist:
   - The amount of blood being lost endangers the casualty’s life.
   - The bleeding cannot be stopped by the application of a field dressing, manual pressure, elevation, and pressure dressing.

4. Prevent or control shock.

5. Treat burns.
   - Stop the casualty from suffering additional burns.
   - Treat existing burns.

**Control Bleeding**

Following are the steps for controlling bleeding:

1. Apply a field dressing.
   a. Expose the wound.
   b. Remove the dressing packet from the casualty's first aid pouch.
   c. Grasp the tails of the dressing with two hands.
   d. Place the dressing directly over the wound. Do not allow it to come into contact with any surface other than the wound.
   e. Wrap the tails of the dressing in place around the injury.
f. Tie the tails in a non-slip knot, two fingers tight, over the outer edge of the dressing.
g. Elevate the injured extremity above the level of the heart.

2. Apply a pressure dressing.
a. Place a wad of padding directly over the wound and on top of the original dressing.
b. Place an improvised dressing over the wad of padding and wrap it tightly around the limb. Tie the ends in a non-slip knot, one finger tight, directly over the wound.
c. If the skin beyond the injury becomes cool, blue or darker in hue, or numb, loosen the dressing.

3. Apply a tourniquet.
a. Prepare a tourniquet at least 2 inches wide. Locate a rigid, stick-like object.
b. Place the tourniquet 2 to 4 inches above the wound.
c. Tie a half-knot. Place the stick on top of the half-knot.
d. Tie a square knot over the stick.
e. Twist the stick until the bright red bleeding stops.
f. Secure the stick so that the stick does not unwind.
g. Mark the casualty's forehead with a "T" to show that a tourniquet is in place. Also include the time the tourniquet was applied, if possible.
h. Seek medical aid.

Prevent or Control Shock

Recall the signs and symptoms of shock:
- Sweaty but cool skin
- Pale skin
- Blotchy blue skin (if light-skinned person) or gray skin (if dark-skinned person)
- Restlessness or nervousness
- Confusion
- Thirst
- Severe bleeding
- Rapid breathing
- Nausea and/or vomiting
Following are the steps for preventing or controlling shock:
1. Lay the casualty on his or her back.
2. Stop any uncontrolled bleeding.
3. Elevate the casualty’s feet so they are higher than the heart.
4. Loosen any restrictive clothing.
5. Prevent chilling.
6. Prevent overheating by providing shelter.
7. Reassure the casualty that you can help.
8. Notify medical personnel.

Treat Burns

Following are the steps for treating burns and a list of cautions.

1. Stop the casualty from suffering additional burns.
   - Thermal. If a soldier's clothing is on fire, cover him with a jacket or any large, non-synthetic material and roll him on the ground.
   - Electrical. Use nonconductive materials to remove the casualty from the electrical source.
   - Chemical. Flush liquid chemicals with lots of water. If large amounts of water are available, flush dry chemicals. Otherwise brush off loose particles. Smother white phosphorus burns with wet cloths and keep the burn wet.
   - Laser. Move the casualty away from the laser source.

2. Treat existing burns. NOTE: Electrical burns often have an entry and exit point. The sole of the foot is a common exit point. Treat both points.
   a. Expose the wound.
   b. Remove any jewelry before swelling sets in.
   c. Put a field dressing on the burn.
   d. Prevent shock.
   e. Seek medical help.

Do not cause further injury by:
   - Cleaning the burn
   - Pulling clothing over the burns
   - Breaking blisters
   - Placing a dressing over the face or genitals
   - Applying ointment or grease to the burns