Treating Athletic Injuries

A Discussion of First Aid and the Treatment of Injuries Received in Athletic Competition

Seventh Annual Revision

What is First Aid?

With reference to athletic injuries it means the care and treatment of all minor accidents that are continually happening to the members of your squad—not only the first treatment, but the subsequent care necessary to prevent infection or complications.

Your problem is to keep your players in the game at top form and ready to give their best performance. How best can this be done? What do you have to do, and why?

Athletic injuries naturally divide themselves into three groups.

First, there are some things the player can do for himself. It is your job to tell him what to do, and how to do it, and then see that he does it. Properly sterilizing all scratches and places where the skin is broken—no matter how small, preventing blisters and galled skin, stopping a sore throat or cold—in the early stages—keeping the bowels regular, diet, etc. These little things can become major problems when neglected.

Therefore, outline a course of instruction on personal First Aid treatment and hygiene for these minor things and insist that it be followed by every athlete.

In the second group there are those injuries that should be treated by the coach or trainer—larger open wounds, boils, stiff and sore muscles, sprains, bruises, "charlie horse."

These must be given personal supervision, because they are the ones that reduce efficiency—keep the men on the sidelines—prevent team work and lower chances for victory.

In the third group we have injuries that should not be handled by the coach—fractures, internal injuries, concussions, injuries to the eye, ear, or teeth—those should be taken immediately to your physician.

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Open Wounds

Your first problem—the one occuring most often—is the treatment of open wounds.

By open wounds, we mean cuts, clips, strawberries, skinned elbows, or knees or any place where the skin is broken.

It is a scientific fact that the only cause for infection in new wounds is the entrance of bacteria into the wound.

If these wounds are not immediately sterilized, the pus germ (staphlococcus) enters. One single germ can grow into 8 million overnight.

It is necessary for the blood to combat these germs and considerable time and energy are consumed before they are killed and carried away. This time and energy can be saved if the wound is properly treated.

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Treatment of Open Wounds

Use Nitrophen immediately on all wounds where the skin is broken.

1. It sterilizes thoroughly in 90 seconds.

2. It penetrates deeply.

3. It checks excess bleeding.

4. It keeps its germicidal strength indefinitely.

5. It anaesthetizes—relieving pain.

7. It is ideal for treating cuts, scratches, floor burns, fire burns, blisters or strawberries.

It is a modern germicide containing all the elements for quick and complete sterilization.

Directions—Saturate a piece of cotton with Nitrophen and place it over the wound. While sterilization is complete in 90 seconds, it is advisable that the cotton be left on for three or four minutes.

Nitrophen goes farther than just killing harmful bacteria in the wound.

If given these extra minutes, it will seal the bleeding capillaries, coagulate the lymph, draw the torn, jagged edges of the wound together and prevent the forming of toxin, which is produced by the decomposition of destroyed tissues. When this treatment is completed, the wound is ready for an antiseptic dressing.

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Excessive Bleeding

For excessive bleeding from open wounds, use a thick pad of bandage. This is made by folding the bandage back and forth many times. Saturate this pad with Nitrophen and place on the wound. Fasten on tightly with bandage and adhesive tape.

If bleeding still persists, a blood vessel has probably been severed and a tourniquet should be applied.

Care should be taken in the use of a tourniquet. It should not be twisted too tightly—just enough to stop the bleeding and should be loosened every ten minutes. Remove tourniquet as soon as bleeding has stopped.

For nose bleed, twist a pledget of cotton onto a wood applicator—saturate with Nitrophen and apply into the nostril.

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Directions for Preparing an Antiseptic Dressing

Take a piece of gauze pad or piece of folded sterile bandage, large enough to overlap the wound generously on all sides. Cover this with a coating of Healing Ointment, one-eighth inch thick and lay over the wound, being sure that you get com-