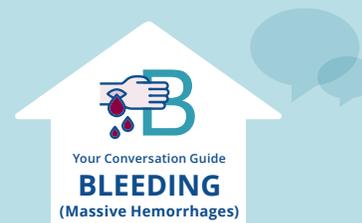


Be Prepared: Palliative Care Emergencies in the Home

A Tool for Patients and Caregivers



This tool helps you know the actions you can take and reassuring words to use if your loved one is experiencing heavy bleeding. Your healthcare provider will review the actions with you.

Actions you can take	Comforting Words
<p>Use dark towels or sheets (such as black, brown, or red) to mask the appearance of bleeding, helping to prevent distress or alarm for the patient, or others, when seeing a large amount of blood.</p> 	<p><i>"I'm going to clean up a bit; taking away the blood may help you feel better."</i></p>
<p>Apply pressure to the bleeding area(s)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carefully apply pressure with towels or dressings to the bleeding area(s). If you have been shown, pack the area with gauze. 	<p><i>"I'm gently pressing here to help the bleeding. Tell me if you're uncomfortable."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm going to squeeze your nose to help. Just a little pressure, okay?" (e.g., for a nose bleed).</i></p>
<p>Stay with your loved one</p> <p>Try to keep them calm and explain what's happening to them.</p> 	<p><i>"I'm staying right beside you. You are having some bleeding that the nurses have shown me how to help you with."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm right here with you. I will not be leaving."</i></p>
<p>Administer medication</p> <p>If prescribed, give any medications as you were shown by the nurse to help with the bleeding or calm your loved one.</p> 	<p><i>"This medication will help you relax and slow the bleeding. The nurse has shown me how to administer it."</i></p>
<p>Adjust positions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gently place your loved one on their side to avoid swallowing or choking on blood. If the bleeding is coming from an arm or leg, raise that body part to slow bleeding. If they are in shock, and not bleeding from their mouth, lay them flat on their back with their legs elevated. This position increases blood flow to vital organs, especially the brain. 	<p><i>"Let me gently adjust you; it's to help with the bleeding and make sure you're comfortable."</i></p>
<p>Keep them warm</p> <p>Cover your loved one with a blanket. They can quickly become very cold if they are losing a lot of blood.</p> 	<p><i>"I know that you are feeling cold. I am going to try to warm you up with this blanket."</i></p>

IF:

- ✓ you feel overwhelmed and need help.
- ✓ you feel your loved one is not feeling better after trying different strategies.
- ✓ you are worried about heavy bleeding.
- ✓ you have questions about what to do.



Call your Healthcare Team

Day time: _____

Evening: _____

Night time: _____

5 things you should know about a Massive Hemorrhage



1 What is a massive hemorrhage?

A massive bleed is when someone loses blood fast. Sometimes, a bit of blood might be lost, which isn't an urgent situation, but it should be watched.

2 What causes a massive hemorrhage?

Some people with blood disorders, liver disease or certain types of cancers may experience unexpected heavy bleeding. There are also certain medications that might increase the risk of bleeding (e.g., steroids, anti-inflammatories, and blood thinners).

3 What signs should I look for?

Recognizing the signs of heavy bleeding is crucial for your loved one's well-being. Here's what you should watch for:

- **Visible bleeding:** You might see blood coming from a wound, sore, or when they cough.
- **Change in urine:** You'll notice the urine turning bright red or becoming dark.
- **Blood in stool:** The stool may appear very dark or show visible blood.
- **Blood in vomit:** The vomit might resemble coffee grounds or contain bright red spots.
- **Fast heartbeat:** You'll feel or notice their heart beating faster than usual.
- **Low blood pressure:** They might seem dizzy or lightheaded.
- **Signs of shock:** Their skin may feel cold, look pale, they might breathe rapidly, and their pulse could be weak yet fast.
- **Fainting or loss of consciousness:** If they suddenly faint or become very drowsy or lose consciousness, it could indicate internal bleeding.

4 How can we treat a massive hemorrhage?

It's important to know how to respond if your loved one has a massive bleed. The best thing you can do is stay by their side, remain calm, and try to make them comfortable.

Actions you can take if a massive bleed happens include using dark towels and sheets to lessen any distress from the blood, adjusting their position for safety, and administering certain medications to help keep them calm and slow the bleeding.

5 When should I call the healthcare team?

Always know your healthcare team is available to support you. Some specific situations when you should urgently contact the healthcare team if a person has a massive hemorrhage are:

- **Uncontrolled bleeding:** If the hemorrhage doesn't stop or slow down despite applying pressure or using other first-aid measures.
- **Change in consciousness:** If the patient becomes dizzy, disoriented, loses consciousness, or exhibits any signs of going into shock.
- **Significant pain:** If the patient expresses or shows signs of severe pain or discomfort that isn't alleviated with usual pain management techniques.
- **Recurrent hemorrhaging:** If the patient experiences multiple episodes of heavy bleeding in a short period, even if each episode seems to stop.
- **Pale or blue skin:** If the patient's skin becomes notably paler than usual, cold to touch, or starts turning bluish, indicating potential significant blood loss or reduced oxygenation.