

WARNING: Cycling can be dangerous, with crashing always a possibility. It is not a matter of if, but when. Most incidents are minor, resulting in some skin loss that is called “Road Rash.” The tips shared here does not constitute formal medical advice, as the reader should always first consult their healthcare provider for any medical needs. The information provided here is solely for general interest of the reader.

Road Rash is a scraping of the skin from a fall on the ground or pavement. Scrapes (according to webMD.com) are skin wounds that rub or tear off skin. Most crash type scrapes are shallow and do not extend far into the skin, but some may remove several layers. Usually there is a little bleeding from a scrape, and it may ooze a pinkish fluid. Most scrapes are minor, so home treatment is usually all that is needed to care for the wound.

Scrapes can occur on any part of the body but usually affect bony areas, such as the hands, forearms, elbows, knees, or shins. Scrapes on the head or face may appear worse than they are and bleed a lot because of the ample blood supply to these areas. Controlling the bleeding will allow you to determine the seriousness of the injury. Road rash is usually more painful than cuts because road rash tears a larger area of skin and exposes more nerve endings.

How road rash heals depends on the depth, size, and location of the wound. Occasionally, the crash that caused the road rash will have also caused a deeper wound that may need to be treated by a health care professional. If this is the case, seek help promptly.

5 QUICK CARE STEPS:

STEP 1. ASSESS DAMAGE.

Assess your situation. Do not forget to move yourself and your bike out of harms way. Assess your wounds. You want to clean the wound and stop the bleeding. This is the time to seek help from Emergency Personnel at the race event site. If you are not racing, determine if there is immediate cause for you to seek a health care professional. If



American Red Cross

Being active, with a lifetime activity like cycling is a great lifestyle choice. But with being active there is a risk of injury. Basic First-Aid and CPR knowledge is very important and Emergency situations can strike at anytime with anyone. Consider taking a course to get prepared, as there are many offered by the American Red Cross to help ensure that you, your team mates, friends and family are ready.

American Red Cross First Aid, CPR and AED programs are designed to give you the confidence to respond in an emergency situation with skills that can save a life.

Additional training in bloodborne pathogens, oxygen administration and injury prevention can be added to CPR and First Aid training to prepare you to prevent and respond to life-threatening emergencies.

Red Cross Preparedness programs in First Aid, CPR and AED are available for any age and can be tailored to the needs of specific groups and individuals. Whether you work with children, want training for team or employees, are a professional rescuer, or simply want to know how to help someone in an emergency, the American Red Cross has a program for you. Find out more about the American Red Cross advantage to be prepared.

American Red Cross

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you think no other tissues, such as blood vessels, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, bones, or internal organs, have been injured, then you can care for this wound by yourself. The best time to treat skin abrasion injuries is immediately after they happen.

STEP 2. CLEAN THE WOUND

Use an Antiseptic to soak and clean the injury. Some brands will help numb the wound so you can better clean it. Water from your water bottle works if you don't have an antiseptic. Thoroughly cleanse any dirt and debris from the wound area. Try to get out foreign

debris now, while it's fresh. You need to get rid of debris to help prevent infections (both bacterial skin infections and tetanus, or lockjaw). If it has been 5 years since your last tetanus shot, you should seek medical attention to get one. Use a t-shirt to scrub if you don't have any first aid. This prevents your body from sealing in the dirt and decreasing your chances of getting a "dirt tattoo".

If you have a First Aid "Crash Pack" use it now. It contains everything you need to clean and bandage a large skin abrasion injury. If not, do the best you can with what you have. This is a good time to take two to four 200mg ibuprofen with food. The max dose is 800mg every six hours. If you are prone to gastritis or ulcers go with acetaminophen (Tylenol) 650-1000mg, with no more than 1000mg every 4 hours. This will help your tolerance with pain of cleaning and it can help right before bedtime.

Try to keep the wound covered and moist until you can get to the shower or the Emergency Room. If wound is still bleeding, apply compression until the blood flows stops. In a luke warm shower, gently scrub the wound. It's going to hurt but it's necessary to get out all the debris that could cause infection or get healed into the wound. Use tweezers to get any larger particles of gravel. Use a mild anti-bacterial soap and soft loofah sponge or cotton wash cloth. Careful not to start the bleeding again. Gently tap dry with a paper towel.

STEP 3. APPLY ANTIBIOTIC

Apply a generous layer of a Triple Antibiotic ointment to your freshly scrubbed wound. This creates a moist layer over the wound that prevents it from drying out and forming a scab. Your chances of scarring are greatly reduced using this moist wound healing method. A petroleum jelly or an A&D diaper ointment layer over the antibiotic will help bandages from sticking. Cover and keep applying the ointment two or three times a day until the wound turns pink.

If you have the resources, you get from medical supply stores Duoderm 4x4 extra thin CGF dressings (ConvaTex/Bristol-Myers Squibb) or Tegaderm(3M) patches. These are not easily found at the local pharmacy. These hydrocolloid dressings produce a moist healing environment and offers wound

protection. They were developed for non-healing, chronic wound care for the elderly. They are super against an arm or a leg of road rash. A box of ten 4"x4" patches can cost over \$50 and they are not sold in single dressings.

Tegaderm (3M) is another option. It is thinner but does not work as well as the Duoderm. Both of these are used instead of the triple antibiotic petroleum jelly mentioned before. You should still apply bandages over Duoderm or Tegaderm.

Another specialty item worth having are Hibiclens Surgical Scrub Brush and Fingernail cleaners, which are beneficial with their brush and sponge sides. These have a solution and detergent for effective antimicrobial cleaning.

A bottle of Schur-Clens (ConvaTec) wound cleanser works well. It's effective with the least chance for trauma to tissues while removing harmful material during cleansing. Once used hydrogen peroxide can be damaging and may delay wound healing. Even though it is easily obtained, it is best to not use it.



STEP 4. BANDAGE THE WOUND

Cover with a non-stick gauze or hydro-gel. An easily found and frugal alternative would be thin maxipads. They are cheap wound dressing with a little padding to keep clothes from rubbing against the wound, especially bodyparts like hips and shoulders. They may need to be held in place by ribbon tape. If your road rash wounds have increased redness, swelling, pain, pus or smell bad, you need to seek professional help. These could be the signs of infection.

Use a fishnet tube bandage or easy-to-find panty hose to keep bandages in place. Joints such as knees and elbows are hard to tape, so these options will keep things from moving out of place. These work without adhesives found in tapes that can cause skin irritation or pull on body hair during changing of bandages. The fishnet tube bandage will breathe better than the

panty hose. Think of this during hot weather and how much you sweat.

Keep wounds covered until they heal and turn pink (about seven to twelve days depending on the severity of the injury).

STEP 5. PROTECT THE WOUND

When your wounds have safely made it past the point of infection and scabbing, there's still a chance of scarring. Much of the scarring process is genetically predetermined but you can do a lot to help prevent wound discoloration by applying a good sunscreen every time you go out into the sun. Better yet, cover with clothing to best limit exposure.

This is the time the wound has a pinkish, transparent look and you are no longer using dressing. If the wound does not appear to be healing, seek professional medical help as soon as possible.

****PLEASE NOTE:** It is always good to consult a medical professional before and after any wound care.

D.I.Y. - Cycling First Aid Kit

You can make your own, or there are a few cycling-specific kits on the market. Either way, having such a kit with you in the car or in your race bag at the track is a great thing to have when you need it. Use a clear see through type bag to hold what you need. This is especially true if you need particular medications of some sort.

Think of having:

- + A small size First Aid Book
- + Chemical cold pack (cold when squeezed)
- + Ibuprofen and Acetaminophen
- + Rubber gloves
- + Mild antibacterial soap
- + Triple Antibiotic ointment (e.g. Polysporin)
- + Petroleum jelly or A&D diaper rash ointment
- + Iodine swabs
- + Alcohol swabs/antiseptic towelettes
- + Q-tips

- + Band Aids of various sizes
- + Medical tape
- + Elastic bandages
- + Gauze bandages & Gauze pads (multi sizes)
- + Transparent dressings
- + Rubber tape
- + Sting Kit / Allergy Kit
- + Safety pins
- + Scissors
- + Tweezers
- + Wash Cloth
- + Fishnet Tube bandage or support panty hose in your size (legs) & a size smaller (arms)
- + Emergency Contact(s) and Insurance Carrier Information



Such a First Aid Kit could be in demand, if not by you, but maybe by a team mate. Be aware of, and try to reduce any and all risks of infectious diseases by eliminating direct exposure of yourself and others to blood and other bodily fluids. It is just good health practice to do so.

The Brave Soldier Crash Pak™ kit

This kit contains everything you need to effectively treat a common road rash injury immediately after crashing. Proper use of this kit helps prevent abrasions from healing with dirt & debris embedded in the wound. Compact packaging stows away perfectly in any jersey pocket or backpack. \$15.00, from www.bravesoldier.com



Amp-3 "Road Rash Kit"

\$16.00

Bike-On-Board "Road Rash Kit"

The following items are included:

Ibuprofen, Acetaminophen, Bacitracin Ointment, Sting Relief Pads, Hoo-Ahhs, Gauze Pads, Xeroform Gauze, Cloth Tape, Flex Wrap Tape, Gloves, Personal Medical Information Cards and a LokSak Storage Bag.



About AMP-3 Store

In business since 2011, our mission is to simply provide THE BEST adventure first-aid kits & specialty gear for the prepared citizen. New products added on a regular basis, so check our website often.

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