Firstaidpro

First Aid Guide for Life-Threatening Bleeding

LIFE-THREATENING BLEED

STOP THE BLEED. CALL 000. RIGHT NOW.

IN LIFE-THREATENING BLEEDING — STOPPING THE BLEED COMES FIRST. Before the airway. Before breathing checks. CONTROL THE BLEED NOW. (ANZCOR Guideline 9.1.1)

HOW DO YOU KNOW IT'S LIFE-THREATENING?

Look for ANY of these signs:

Arm or leg is amputated (fully or partially) above the wrist or ankle

Shark bite, propeller injury, or major trauma to any body part

Bleeding that will not stop with hard, direct pressure

Signs of shock — person is pale, sweaty, confused

Pulse is fast and weak — heart rate over 100

Skin is slow to go pink when you press and release a fingernail

Person is **losing consciousness**

1 CALL 000

Do it now. Don't wait. Tell them: *"I have life-threatening bleeding."* Put the phone on speaker. Keep your hands free.

2 PUSH HARD ON THE WOUND

Use both hands if you need to. Press a cloth, bandage, or pad directly on the bleeding point. Push as hard as you can. This is not the time to be gentle.

3 IS THE BLEED ON A LIMB? (ARM OR LEG ABOVE WRIST OR ANKLE)

USE A TOURNIQUET — immediately.

How to apply a tourniquet:

1. Place it **5 cm above the wound** (closer to the body)
2. **Do not** put it over a joint
3. Tighten it until **the bleeding stops**
4. **Do not cover** it with bandage or clothing — leave it visible
5. **Note the time** you applied it - tell paramedics
6. **Do not remove it.** Leave that to the paramedics.

4 TOURNIQUET NOT STOPPING IT?

- Recheck the position. Is it 5 cm above the wound?
- Tighten it more.
- A second tourniquet can be applied directly above the first.

5 BLEED NOT ON A LIMB? (NECK, TORSO, ARMPIT, GROIN — CAN'T USE A TOURNIQUET)

- Pack the wound with the most absorbent material you have
- Press in hard and hold it there
- If you have a haemostatic dressing (e.g. QuikClot, Celox) — pack it in tight
- Hold constant pressure until paramedics take over. Do not let go

No tourniquet? Improvise. A belt, torn clothing strip, or cord — tied tightly and twisted with a stick or pen. A commercial windlass tourniquet is far better. **Have one in your kit.**

WHILE YOU WAIT FOR 000

- Keep the person lying down
- Keep them warm — use a blanket, jacket, anything
- Talk to them. Keep them with you.
- Do not give food or water
- Do not move them unless there is immediate danger

CRITICAL REMINDERS

DO's	DON'Ts
Press hard and hold	Lift the pad to check
Use a tourniquet on limbs	Put tourniquet over a joint
Show the tourniquet to paramedics	Cover it up
Note the time of tourniquet	Forget to tell 000
Keep the person warm	Leave them alone
Call 000 immediately	Wait to see if it improves

WATCH FOR SHOCK

THESE SIGNS MEAN THE PERSON IS DETERIORATING FAST:

- Skin going pale, cold, or clammy
- Rapid, weak pulse
- Breathing becomes fast and shallow
- Person becomes confused or drowsy

→ Tell the 000 operator immediately if you see these signs.

Based on ANZCOR Guideline 9.1.1 — First Aid for Management of Bleeding anzcor.org | Guidelines current as of 2024. Always verify for latest updates.

Emergency: 000 (AU) | 111 (NZ)

This poster is a memory aid only. It does not replace accredited first aid training. Ensure your first aid certificate is current. Guidelines may change — always refer to the latest ANZCOR guidance at anzcor.org.