A•Cute Kids Urgent Care

Lacerations

Lacerations are extremely common in children. Younger children most commonly injure themselves in falls, while older children most commonly injure themselves during sports or activities.

Types of Lacerations: Lacerations range from superficial abrasions to deeper injuries involving muscles, tendons, ligaments, and blood vessels. Abrasions involving only the top layers of the skin are treated with gentle cleansing and topical antibiotic ointment. Most lacerations are simple, involving only the skin structures. If these lacerations have edges that do not come together, they should be examined by a doctor. Deeper lacerations, dirty lacerations, and lacerations over joints should always be seen by a physician.

Treatment: If your child's laceration has edges that need to be brought together, your physician may close the wound with skin glue, staples or stitches. The choice of closure method depends on the type and location of the wound. For dirty wounds, your physician may prescribe antibiotics. In addition, you may require an update of your tetanus if you have not had a tetanus shot in the last 5 years. (Tetanus is part of the DPT, and children under 9 years of age up to date on their immunizations are usually current on their tetanus.) Stitches and staples are usually removed in 5-14 days, depending on the location of the injury

Follow up: Your physician will give you specific instructions on wound care and follow up. You should contact your doctor immediately for any of the following:

- Increased redness or swelling of the laceration repair site
- Increasing pain
- Drainage from the wound site
- Opening of the wound site
- Increased bleeding form the wound
- Fever
- Worsening symptoms

Please note: These guidelines are not meant to diagnose any condition, or treat any condition not diagnosed by a physician. They are provided for general information only. If you are concerned about your child's condition, call a physician or 911 immediately.