

Candidate Resource 2.2

Treating blisters

Most blisters heal naturally and do not require medical attention. As new skin grows beneath the blister, your body will slowly reabsorb the fluid in the blister and the skin on top will dry and peel off. The unbroken skin over a blister provides a natural barrier to infection. The skin should remain intact to avoid infection. Never pierce a blister with a needle. Allow it to break on its own once the skin underneath has healed.

Cover small blisters with a plaster (adhesive dressing). Larger blisters should be covered with a gauze pad or dressing that you can tape in place. If you have a blister that is painful or in a position that makes it likely to burst (such as on the sole of your foot), cover it with a soft dressing to cushion and protect it. Change the dressing daily.

If a blister bursts, do not peel off the dead skin on top of the blister. Allow the fluid inside to drain, and then cover the blister and the area around it with a dry, sterile dressing to protect it from infection until it heals.

Blood blisters

Leave blood blisters to heal naturally. If a blood blister bursts, keep the area clean and dry and protect it with a sterile dressing to prevent infection.

Blood blisters are often painful. An ice pack applied to the area immediately after the injury can help relieve pain. Apply the ice pack for between 10 and 30 minutes. The ice should not touch your skin directly as this may cause a cold burn, so place a towel over the injured area before applying the ice.

Infection

If a blister becomes infected, it can be treated with antibiotics, which your GP can prescribe.

Medical conditions

If your blisters were caused by a medical condition, this will need to be treated.