

PATHWAY FOR MANAGING HAEMATOMA OF THE SKIN

A haematoma is a localised collection of blood outside of the blood vessels, due to either disease or trauma including injury or surgery and may involve blood continuing to seep from broken capillaries.

A haematoma is initially in liquid form spreading among the tissues where it may coagulate and solidify before blood is reabsorbed in to the blood vessels.

Symptoms generally depend on the size and location. Pain, swelling, redness and disfiguring bruises are common symptoms of a haematoma.

Option 1: Superficial haematoma



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- Rest the area affected
- Apply ice or cold pack see application guide NICE Standard Guidance <https://patient.info/health/painkillers/heat-and-ice-treatment-for-pain>
- Elevate the area;
Head – sit upright
Arm – rest on a pillow or use a sling
Leg – elevate at rest
- Consider pain management
- Complete an EPR wound assessment

Option 2: Conservative Approach



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- Complete an EPR wound assessment.
- Treat the cause of the injury if appropriate.
- Manually cleanse the area
- Consider if palpation will express the haematoma
- Select an appropriate dressing to protect and aid debridement
- Do not use adhesive dressings on the affected area
- Consider referral to Tissue Viability Team if support required
- Consider Pain management
- Assess mobility and refer to the physiotherapy team if appropriate

Option 3: Non-Surgical



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- Complete an EPR wound assessment
- Consider pre-existing co-morbidities; Peripheral Vascular Disease, Heart failure, Diabetes and Age of the patient
- Consider medication which can affect clotting
- Patient considered not fit for surgery
- Referral to Tissue Viability Team
- Consider Referral to Plastic Surgery Team

Option 4: Surgery



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- Complete an EPR wound assessment
- Consider vascular compromise of the affected area
- Consider compartment syndrome
- Consider further investigations for possible fractures
- Referral to plastic surgery team for surgical intervention if the haematoma is considered limb threatening and the patient is medically fit for theatre.