

Blisters

What is it?

A bubble on the skin filled with serum caused by friction, burning, or other damage.

Plan of Action:

If a blister isn't too painful, try to keep it intact. Unbroken skin over a blister may provide a natural barrier to bacteria and decreases the risk of infection. Cover it with a bandage or moleskin. Cut a piece of moleskin into a doughnut shape and place the pad so that it encircles and protects the blister. Then cover the blister and moleskin with gauze.

To relieve blister-related pain, drain the fluid while leaving the overlying skin intact. Here's how:

- **Wash your hands and the blister** with soap and warm water.
- **Swab the blister** with iodine.
- **Clean a sharp needle** with rubbing alcohol.
- **Use the needle to prick the blister in several spots near the edge.** Let the fluid drain, but leave the overlying skin in place.

- **Apply an ointment** such as petroleum jelly to the blister and cover it with a nonstick gauze bandage. If a rash appears, stop using the ointment.
- **Follow-up care.** Check the area every day for infection. After several days, use a tweezers and scissors sterilized with rubbing alcohol to cut away the dead skin. Apply more ointment and a bandage.

Prevention:

To prevent friction blisters on your feet, wear shoes that fit well. It also helps to use moisture-wicking socks. Try the various socks, shoes and insoles that are designed specifically to help reduce blistering. You might also try attaching moleskin to the inside of your shoes where it might rub. Or you can dust the inside of your socks with foot powder. Gloves help prevent blisters on your hands.

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