Foreign Object in the Skin

What is it?

> An object stuck under the skin such as wood splinters, thorns, slivers of metal or glass, and gravel.

Plan of Action:

- Wash your hands and clean the area well with soap and water.
- Use tweezers cleaned with rubbing alcohol to remove the object. Use a magnifying glass to help you see better.
- If the object is under the surface of the skin, sterilize a clean, sharp needle by wiping it with rubbing alcohol. Use the needle to gently break the skin over the object and lift up the tip of the object.
- Use a tweezers to grab the end of the object and remove it.
- Wash the area again and pat dry. Apply petroleum jelly or an antibiotic ointment.

When to Seek Medical Help:

For a foreign object that seems to be more deeply embedded in the skin or muscle.

- Don't try to remove the object. Doing so could cause further harm.

- Bandage the wound. First put a piece of gauze over the object. Then, if it helps, put clean padding around the object before binding the wound securely with a bandage or a piece of clean cloth. Take care not to press too hard on the object.

In addition, seek medical help if:

- The object is hard to see (as with clear glass) or doesn't come out easily (as with a fishhook).

- The injury involves an eye or is close to an eye.

- The wound is deep or dirty and the injured person's last tetanus vaccination was more than five years ago. The doctor may recommend a booster.

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