

### Think Sharp!

#### Preventing cuts from sharp objects

As well as the bleeding and tissue damage, one of the dangers of getting cut is the risk of infection. Even smaller cuts provide an opening where germs can enter the body and bloodstream. Clean the cut area and surrounding skin under running water.

#### Some potential dangers:

**Stationery** - Be careful with sharp stationery like compasses, scissors and staplers. Keep them covered and look for a hard, rather than soft, pencil case if you need to carry them around.

**Knives** - If you're using knives to prepare food, slice away from your fingers. Use a sturdy chopping board and never hold the food from underneath. Hold the food steady by curling your fingers away from the blade and gripping with your fingertips. Make sure the knives are kept sharp (so they don't slip while you're cutting) and stored safely after use.

**Sharp hobby tools** - Certain hobbies involve small, sharp objects – like needles, pins and scalpels. Use a safe storage device like a pin cushion to stop them falling on the floor.

**Sharp tools** - Objects that are both sharp and heavy (e.g. chisels, axes, garden forks) are especially dangerous, as their weight means they often cut deeper into the skin and flesh. They should be locked away in the shed or garage, especially if there are young children in the house.

**Broken glass** - Shards of broken glass can leave deep cuts. Make sure glass or crockery objects (e.g. vases, plates) are stored away from the edges of tables and cupboards, where they might fall and smash. Make sure that mirrors and photo frames are hung securely. If the glass breaks and you're allowed to clear up, use a dust pan and brush – not your hands!

**Razors** - Make sure razors are stored safely and not just left at the side of the bath or shower, where they can fall onto the ground. Replace them when they begin to grow blunt or rusty. Wrap them before putting them in the bin.

**Sharp edges** - Check furniture for sharp edges – it may need sanding down or covering. Watch out for sharp edges on tin cans and even paper! Remember that some plants have sharp prickles or thorns.

#### Case Study: Sharp electrical blades

Electrical equipment containing blades (e.g. blenders, food processors, electric knives) is extremely dangerous, as the blade is strong and moves fast.

It's important to:

- keep your hands well away from the blade
- make sure the device is on a secure, non-slip surface
- keep ties, jewellery and long hair away from the device
- unplug the device when you've finished with it.

