

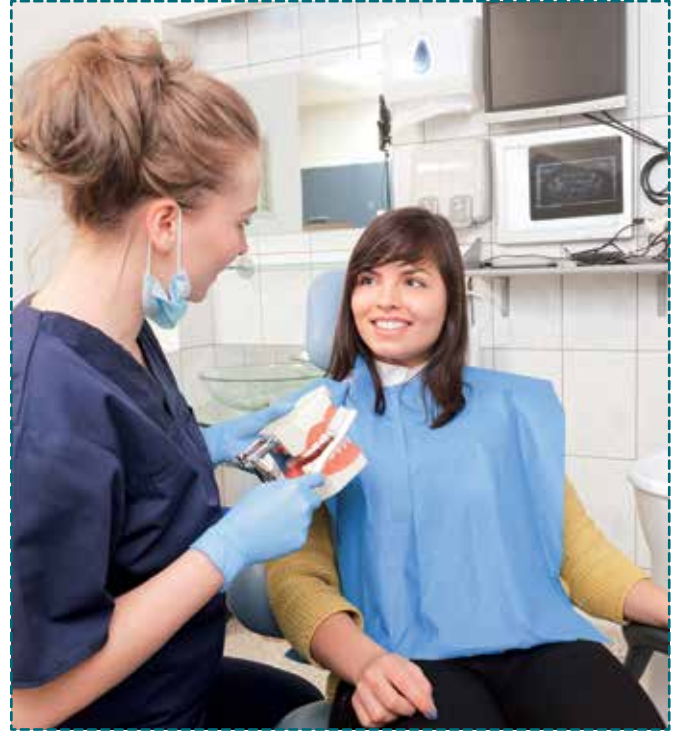
What do I tell my other doctor or dentist?

Bleeding disorders are relatively rare conditions. Most doctors and dentists are not familiar with treatments for bleeding disorders and will not know about your treatment plan.

Although bleeding disorders in females are slowly becoming more well-known, many doctors, nurses and other health professionals still do not realise that girls and women can have inherited bleeding disorders. This can be an added challenge for young women who have bleeding symptoms.

It is important to have some personal strategies to help manage your health care when you are using services outside the Haemophilia Treatment Centre.

These tips give examples of the strategies some Australian women with bleeding symptoms have used.



Tips...

“ I always take every opportunity to discuss my bleeding disorder with other health professionals as an opportunity to advocate, and raise awareness of women with bleeding disorders. They may not have known a lot about it before seeing you, so this your chance to help yourself, and the next girl! ”

“ Do your research and learn to advocate for yourself. There is a shocking amount of misinformation out there about bleeding disorders - especially in regard to how they affect women! Reach out and get to know other bleeder women through Facebook or your local Haemophilia organisation. ”

“ Keep it simple and provide details in writing. The name of your condition, what to do in an emergency, and medications you can't be given. Just as you would with an allergy or any medical condition. ”

- **Bring this booklet with you to any medical, health or dental appointments.** You can use it to help answer questions you might be asked. Your HTC might also have specific brochures you can take with you, for example, on surgery or dentistry if you have a bleeding disorder.
- **Make sure you know what type of bleeding disorder you have and how severe it is. If you are registered for the ABDR, ask the Haemophilia Treatment Centre to organise an ABDR patient card for you.** The ABDR patient card explains your diagnosis, what treatment you should be given and who should be contacted for further advice. Keep the card on you for quick reference.
- **Show your other doctors, dentist, and health care providers your ABDR patient card and ask them to liaise with your Haemophilia Treatment Centre.** This will help with getting appropriate treatment. It will also make it easier to obtain treatment if you need it when you are away from your usual hospital or Haemophilia Treatment Centre, for example, if you are travelling or have moved interstate or overseas.
- **Always inform your doctor, dentist or surgeon if you have a bleeding disorder before having any medical, dental or surgical procedures, no matter how minor.**
- **Before you have any procedures, contact your Haemophilia Treatment Centre and discuss the medical support you may need to prevent bleeding complications.** Where possible, plan this well ahead of time. The Haemophilia Treatment Centre team may also need to liaise with your surgical or dental team or other health professionals involved in your care to discuss the best approach for you individually and any pre- or post-treatment care you may need.
- **Before you start taking anything prescribed by your doctor, naturopath or other health practitioner check with them whether it is safe for someone with a bleeding disorder.** Some medicines, vitamins and supplements can interfere with blood clotting and healing, or can irritate your mucous membranes such as your nasal passages or stomach lining. This includes some herbal and homeopathic medicines and others available over-the-counter, such as aspirin and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs like ibuprofen. Speak with your haematologist or your pharmacist about which medicines you need to be cautious with or avoid.

Talking to health professionals

What can you do to have the best result from your appointment?

- **Being prepared for your appointment** can help – for example, being informed about your bleeding disorder and the symptoms you experience that are relevant to your appointment. This may also involve knowing what you would like as an outcome of the appointment and being able to explain this clearly as well as being open to discussing a different outcome or way to achieve your goal. You may also like to bring a list of questions you have, points you want to discuss or symptoms you have been experiencing to help you remember to ask them in your appointment.
- **It might also help to have any letters explaining your diagnosis and the contact details of the Haemophilia Treatment Centre with you** so you can give them to the health professional and they can find out more information with your consent.
- You may want to **bring someone with you** such as a parent or support person to help you explain your bleeding disorder to health care workers such as doctors and dentists. The support person can also be a second pair of ears to help you remember what was said.
- Some young women say they find it very helpful to **stay calm** when they explain their bleeding disorder to health professionals. They also say it is important to try to **express yourself as clearly as** you can.

For more information visit factoredin.org.au

Important Note: This booklet was developed by Haemophilia Foundation Australia for education and information purposes only and does not replace advice from a treating health professional. Always see your health care provider for assessment and advice about your individual health before taking action or relying on published information. © Haemophilia Foundation Australia, October 2018. www.haemophilia.org.au