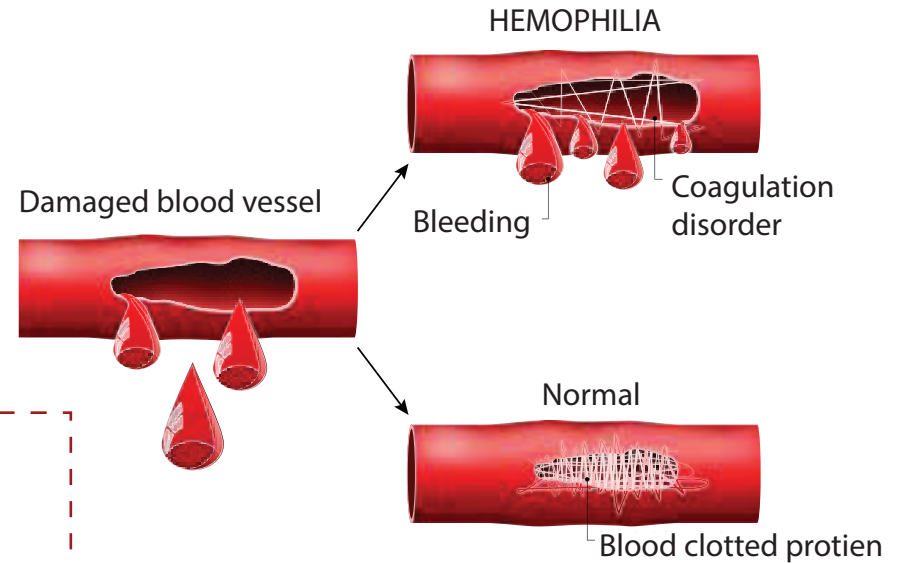


What is it?

Haemophilia is an inherited blood disorder that impairs the body's ability to control blood clotting or coagulation, which stops bleeding when a blood vessel is broken. Haemophilia lowers the blood plasma clotting factor levels needed for a normal clotting process.



Signs and symptoms



Excessive bleeding and bruising.



Heavy bleeding from a minor cut, that resumes after stopping for a short time.



Bleeding in the mouth from a cut or bite, or from cutting or losing a tooth.



Nosebleeds for no clear reason.



Bleeding can be internal (inside the body) or external (on the surface) of the body.



External bleeding.

Causes

Haemophilia is a hereditary condition – meaning you are born with it.

It is caused by a defect in one of the genes that determine how the body makes blood clotting factor VIII or IX.

Types

Haemophilia A
Classic haemophilia Clotting factor VIII (8) is low or missing

Haemophilia B
Christmas disease Clotting factor IX (9) is low or missing



Internal Bleeding

- **Blood in the urine** (from bleeding in the kidneys or bladder)
- **Blood in the stool** (from bleeding in the intestines or stomach)
- **Large bruises** (from bleeding into the large muscles of the body)
- **Bleeding in the knees, elbows, or other joints** is another common form of internal bleeding. This bleeding can occur without clear signs of injury.
 - **The bleeding causes tightness in the joint** with no real pain or any visible signs of bleeding. The joint then becomes swollen, hot to the touch, and painful to bend.
 - **Swelling increases as bleeding continues.** Movement in the joint is temporarily lost. Pain can be severe. Joint bleeding that is not treated quickly can damage the joint.

Bleeding in the brain

Internal bleeding in the brain is a very serious complication of haemophilia. It can happen after a simple bump on the head or a more serious injury. The signs and symptoms of bleeding in the brain include:

- Long-lasting, painful headaches or neck pain and stiffness
- Repeated vomiting
- Drowsiness or changes in behaviour
- Sudden weakness or clumsiness of the arms and legs, or problems walking
- Doubled vision
- Convulsions or seizures

TREATMENT

Treatments available for haemophilia are very effective. The missing clotting factor is injected into the bloodstream using a standard needle. Bleeding stops when sufficient clotting factor reaches the bleeding spot.

Treat bleeding quickly! Quick treatment will help reduce pain and damage to the joints, muscles and organs. The faster the bleed is treated, the more effective the treatment will be.

Never wait until a joint is hot, swollen or painful.





LIFESTYLE CHANGES



Children who have haemophilia need extra protection from objects in the home and elsewhere that could cause injuries and bleeding. Protect toddlers with kneepads, elbow pads, and protective helmets. All children should wear safety helmets when riding tricycles or bicycles. Be sure to use the safety belts and straps in highchairs, car seats, and strollers to protect your child from falls.

Remove furniture with sharp corners or pad them while your child is a toddler.

Keep out of reach or locked away all small, sharp objects and other items that could cause injury and bleeding.

Check toys and outdoor play areas for possible hazards.



Exercise regularly. Activities such as swimming, cycling and walking can strengthen muscles while protecting joints. Contact sports — such as football, hockey or wrestling — are not safe for people with haemophilia.



Avoid certain medications. Drugs that can aggravate bleeding include aspirin and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, others). Instead, use acetaminophen (Tylenol, others), which is a safe alternative for mild pain relief. Also avoid certain blood-thinning medications, such as heparin and warfarin. (Coumadin), which prevent blood from clotting. Certain herbal supplements also contain ingredients that may cause bleeding, especially if you have haemophilia. Talk to your doctor before taking any herbal supplements.



Practice good dental hygiene. This can help prevent the need to have a tooth pulled, which can lead to excessive bleeding.



Avoid injections into muscles

- A muscle injection can cause painful bleeding.
- **Vaccinations** are important and safe for those with haemophilia. Other medications should be taken orally or injected into a vein rather than into a muscle.