

Dos and don'ts for easy splinter removal

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Photo: AAD

(HealthDay)—Along with the hot days of summer will come a perennial hazard of outdoor living: splinters.

Fortunately, dermatologists say splinters are usually easy to remove so you or your child can move on to more pleasant activities.

"Splinters come in all shapes and sizes, and they can really hurt," said Dr. Robert Sidbury, division chief of dermatology at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle.

"To reduce pain and the possibility of an infection, splinters should be removed as quickly as possible," he added in a news release from the American Academy of Dermatology.

Sidbury provided the following tips for safe and easy splinter removal:

- With soap and water, gently wash and dry the area where the splinter has entered the skin.
- Use a magnifying glass if the splinter is very small. Look to see its size and the direction it entered the skin.
- To remove the splinter, use tweezers to grab on to the part sticking out of the skin. But first sterilize the tip of the tweezers with rubbing alcohol.
- Don't risk splitting the splinter into parts by trying to squeeze it out.
- If the entire splinter is under the skin, you may need a small needle to remove it. Sterilize the needle with rubbing alcohol and pierce the skin surface at one end of the splinter. (Use a magnifying glass, and ask for help, if necessary). Then, use the sterilized tweezers to pull the splinter out once it comes up out of the skin.
- Finally, clean the [skin](#) area with soap and water and apply petroleum jelly and a bandage.

"Most splinters can be safely removed at home, but some may require medical assistance," Sidbury said. "See your doctor or a board-certified

dermatologist if your splinter is very large, deep, located in or near your eye or if the area becomes infected."

More information: For more about splinters, visit the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#).

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