EAR INJURIES

Bleeding from the ear can mean that either the eardrum has been ruptured or the victim has sustained a fractured skull. In both cases the fluid should be allowed to drain with the injured ear downward to prevent a build up of pressure within the skull. A pad is placed over the ear to prevent infection and capture the fluid for identification by a pathologist.

POSSIBLE CAUSES

Blunt trauma to the head
An object forced into the ear canal
Changes in pressure i.e. explosion, underwater deep (SCUBA) diving

SYMPTOMS & SIGNS

Pain
Deafness or impaired hearing
Bleeding from the ear
Signs of injury within the skull: watery fluid mixed with blood from the ear, headache or an altered conscious state

MANAGEMENT

Call ‘000’ for an ambulance.
Position victim comfortably, sitting up with the head tilted towards the side of the injury.
Cover any external injuries.
Treat for shock.