

Stop the bleeding



Tips from the Posse

By Mark Rackay

My wife was at work, and I was enjoying a day at home. Her being at work allowed me time to get some things done without her finding other things I should be doing. You married guys understand. I wanted to work on the boat, not the lawn.

I was working on one of the boat trailers, replacing the bunks. As I was drilling new holes for the lag screws, the drill slipped off and went straight through my hand. It was kind of interesting for a second or two, seeing the drill bit still spinning, but then the bleeding and pain took over.

I reacted the way any normal husband would react to such a traumatic injury, when his wife was not home. I ran through the house looking for something to wrap around the mess to dam the blood flow. I finally settled on a dish towel I found on the kitchen counter.

When my wife arrived home from work, she had no sympathy for me and my life-threatening injuries. All she cared about was her rugs. She claimed the house looked like a crime scene. The “he bled in every room of the house” incident, as she referred to it for many years, was an exaggeration. I never entered the bathroom, garage or laundry room. Thinking back on that day, there were a few lessons to be learned.

On that fateful afternoon, I ran past a first aid kit that was in the boat, another in the truck, and supplies in each bathroom and the kitchen. I will openly admit that I panicked, seeing the blood flow out when I knew that I would be better served if that blood stayed inside me. I’m fortunate that I did not cut an artery, or I probably would have been dead. A bunch of stitches and a few weeks of therapy, and the hand was as good as new, and a really neat looking scar as a souvenir.

This incident occurred almost 40 years ago. I have since had countless hours of training, certifications,



This tourniquet lives on my pack and goes with me anytime I am in the woods. You must have a tourniquet handy as you don’t have much time when you need one. (Mark Rackay/Special to the MDP)

and unfortunately, many years of hands-on and on-the-job training and experience.

What got me thinking of this was my annual review of my first aid kits. I go through them each year to replace what has expired or been used up. The glue on the “boo-boo” strips go bad after a year or so, and many of the meds expire. All this got me thinking about traumatic injuries and blood loss.

About 60,000 Americans die annually from blood loss. Worldwide, that number is more than 2 million. Physical trauma and blood loss are in the Top 5 of reasons people die in the great outdoors. Many of these deaths could have been prevented if someone on scene, or the victim, did something to control the bleeding.

A fellow officer was in an altercation with a bad guy, back in the early 1980s, involving a knife. The bad guy stabbed the officer in the leg, slicing an artery, and then fled the scene. The officer bled to death in front of nine witnesses, because none of them knew how to apply a tourniquet.

If you look at just about

any of the premade first aid kits, there is nothing in there for severe bleeding. I could not find an outdoor kit that came with a tourniquet. Some supplied Combat Gauze, and a few carried some type of blood clotting pads, but very few.

All the premade kits come with a little instruction booklet, to show you what to do, in the event there is severe bleeding. Considering that a person with a cut artery can bleed to death in just a couple minutes, you better be a fast reader.

The Red Cross first aid classes, as well as most of the classes taught to people, talk about direct pressure on the wound. These classes emphasize that a tourniquet is to be used only as a last resort. Direct pressure is fine and dandy if you are in town, and EMS is five minutes away, but probably not such a good idea when you are 100 miles northwest of nowhere. EMS is probably a day away, and by then, you have boarded the last train west.

People talk about how just about anything, a rope, belt, suspender,

pack strap, and other things can be used as a tourniquet. While it is true, I ask if any of you have ever used a tourniquet, or practiced using one? It takes lots of pressure to get a tourniquet tight enough, and it must be applied well above the injury, or it will not work. Go high and tight, is the thinking here. As high up the limb as you can get.

We all need to train and practice the skills of using that Combat Gauze, Israeli Bandage and tourniquet, not just carry them around. You don’t want to experiment and learn while someone is bleeding out in front of you. It can be an even worse outcome if you are trying to stop your own severe bleeding with nobody around to help.

If you carry a Cat 3, Cat 7, or a SWAT-T tourniquet, take it out and practice putting it on yourself, perhaps one handed. Do the same on someone else and learn how it operates. As I said before, you want to know how to work it before you need it.

There are several ways you can learn about traumatic injuries and an emergency response. One is [www.stopthebleedcoalition.org](http://www.stopthebleedcoalition.org). They have on-line and in person classes directly related to this type of emergency. Remember that their mindset is for someone in town with EMS on the way, but it is a good start.

Rescue Essentials, [www.rescue-essentials.com](http://www.rescue-essentials.com), sells premade kits and all the supplies you may need to design your own kit. These folks also offer online videos to teach how certain equipment works and other medical tips, and most are free.

I still seem to injure myself on a regular basis. I carry a small med kit with me everywhere I go. My old grandmother used to get mad at me for bleeding all over her rugs, just like my wife does. It must be a woman thing.

*Mark Rackay is a columnist for the Montrose Daily Press, Delta County Independent, and several other newspapers, as well as a feature writer for several saltwater fishing magazines. He is an avid hunter and world class saltwater angler, who travels around the world in search of adventure and serves as a director and public information officer for the Montrose County Sheriff’s Posse. For information about the posse, call 970-252-4033 (leave a message) or email [info@mcspi.org](mailto:info@mcspi.org)*

Nature-Deficit Disorder and the alarming effects on children

By Anne Janik  
Friends of Youth and Nature

For the first time in history, most of our children are growing without a real connection to nature.

Nature-Deficit Disorder was recognized in 2005 in the book, “Last Child in The Woods: Saving our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder.”

Nature-Deficit Disorder isn’t a medical diagnosis, but it is a term recognizing an urgent problem. Richard Louv coined the term, and it was recognized by many as a call to action — to save children from losing a connection to nature.

Urbanization and technological advancements are a trend, but the resulting gap between the natural world and children creates concern. Since the recognition of Nature-Deficit Disorder, numerous scientific studies have shown that disconnection from nature can result in diminished use of the senses, higher obesity rates, attention difficulties and a range of illnesses.

On average, children ages 8-12 spend four to six hours a day viewing a screen and teenagers can spend up to nine, while spending less than an hour outdoors. Regular screen time and deprivation from recreating outdoors leads to mood swings, lower grades, sleep deprivation, a poor self-image, screen dependency, irregular psychological shifts, depression and lower cognitive function.

Virtual realities can affect a child’s demeanor and outlook on life. It is recognized that one of the goals of social media apps is to maximize the time spent on that interface.

Children are immensely vulnerable and are susceptible to making screen time a priority in their day. Conflicts over screen time are common between parents and their children. As a parent, you aren’t alone regarding this issue. Unfortunately, these conflicts can affect the level of parent engagement with their kids.

Children who engage in too much screen time become less in-tune with and more detached from

their surroundings. Extreme situations can lead to Depersonalization-De-realization Disorder, a serious medical illness. Children indulging in heavy social media may have reduced creativity, decision-making ability or ability to have authentic interactions.

There is power in conscious decision-making. Parents, relatives, friends and mentors can help kids make healthy decisions about how they can feed their bodies and brains. Alternatives to watching a video, TV show or playing a video game might include a walk to a park, a playdate in a neighbor’s backyard, building a fort, climbing up a tree or a spontaneous scavenger hunt.

A solution is in the magic experiences outdoor spaces can bring. A study in the journal “Environment and Behavior” demonstrates that children who spend even short periods outdoors see a reversal in fatigue and concentration issues. Indulging in outdoor activities boosts children’s morale, energy levels, perception and drive. Recreating in the outdoors gives kids a chance to glance far beyond a screen and to become immersed in what it is like to live, love and belong in the natural world.

Here in Western Colorado, we have many organizations and passionate teachers who are more than ready to assist kids and their families with becoming familiar with the great outdoors. As a parent or guardian, are you looking for a few ideas to encourage your kids to take it outside?

**Try these creative outdoor activities with your kids:**

Generation Wild suggests 20 ideas for 20 minutes — the magic number for helping kids feel better ([generationwild.com/20idealist](http://generationwild.com/20idealist)). 100 things to do before you are 12 ([generationwild.com/the-list](http://generationwild.com/the-list)) Backyard hacks — the best things to happen in the backyard since the invention of the barbecue ([generationwild.com/backyard-hacks](http://generationwild.com/backyard-hacks)).

See CHILDREN page A11

GREAT  
OUTDOORS  
Company

**BONUS!!**  
Select Rental  
Skis \$225

**CROSS-COUNTRY  
SKI CLEARANCE**

**10 SOUTH SELIG AVE** **MONTROSE, COLORADO 81401** **970-249-4226**