



First aid fact sheet

Burn or scald



- Do not apply lotions, ointments, fat or ice to a burn.
- Do not touch the injured areas or burst any blisters.
- Do not remove anything sticking to the burn.
- If the burn is larger than a 20 cent piece, or deep, seek medical aid.

Signs and symptoms

Superficial burns The area is:

- red
- very painful
- blistered.

Deep burns The area is:

- mottled red and white
- dark red or pale yellow
- painful
- blistered.

Full thickness burns The area:

- is white or charred
- feels dry and leathery.
- Because the nerves are destroyed, the pain will not be as great as in a superficial burn.

A 'cold' burn is actually tissue damage from extreme cold, thus treatment is different from thermal burns. See the fact sheet on frostbite.

What to do

If the patient's clothing is on fire

- 1 Stop the patient from moving around.
- 2 Drop the patient to the ground and cover or wrap them in a blanket or similar, if available.
- 3 Roll the patient along the ground until the flames are extinguished.
- 4 Manage the burn.

For all burns

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 If the burn is severe or if it involves the airway, call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance.
- 3 As soon as possible, hold the burnt area under cool running water for 20 minutes.
- 4 Remove any clothing and jewellery from the burnt area, unless they are stuck to the burn.
- 5 Cover the burn with a light, loose nonstick dressing, preferably clean, dry, non-fluffy material (eg plastic cling film).
- 6 Continue to check the patient for shock, and treat if necessary.

In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)

DRSABCD Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

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