

# FIRST AID GUIDE

# FIRST AID FOR BURNS

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First Aid

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## Burn Classifications

- 1. Superficial:** Reddening of skin on affected area. Swelling and localised pain.
- 2. Partial thickness:** Characterised by combination of reddening, swelling, and blistering of skin. Clear fluid seeps from blisters if burst and localised pain.
- 3. Full thickness:** Skin looks pitted and charred. Skin surrounding affected area looks wax-like. Blisters will form and clear fluid will leak from affected area. Victim may not feel any pain if the nerve endings are damaged.

## 1 Evaluate Potential Dangers

1. Make sure you have neutralised any hazard before you try to treat a burn victim. When you are able to reach the victim, check for a response.



## 2 Treatment of Burns

1. If conscious, reassure victim and calm them.
2. Cool the burn with cool running water for up to 20 mins. Repeat if necessary. No ice.
3. Call for medical assistance, '000'.
4. Remove clothing around area of burn unless sticking to skin. If able, remove any restrictive items such as jewellery.
5. Apply non-adhesive, non-fluffy (wet), sterile dressing.
6. Do not burst blisters or remove damaged skin. Do not use ointments or fats such as butter.

## 3 Dealing with Chemical Burns

1. Flush the affected area with cool running water for 20 minutes, repeat if necessary. No ice.
2. Make sure chemical does not reach unaffected areas.
3. Clothing that has been contaminated should be removed if it does not cling to the skin of affected area.
4. Check SDS sheet and call for medical assistance and tell them what type of chemical burn



## 4 Applying Dressing to Burns

1. Apply non-adhesive, non-fluffy (wet) sterile dressings once the burns have cooled down.
2. Dressings soaked in water-based gel may be used to minimise infection.
3. Dressings can be improvised if necessary.
4. Note: majority of chemical burns occur after physical contact.

## 6 Burning Clothes

1. If victim's clothing is on fire, their airway will be at risk.
2. Try to get the victim on the ground (stop, drop and roll) to put out the flames.
3. If available, use a fire blanket to extinguish flames. Start at the victim's head and work towards their feet.
4. Cool burned areas with cool running water. Cover burned area when cooled.
5. Call for medical assistance, '000'.
7. Monitor and reassure victim. Document incident.

## 7 Dealing with Complicated Burns

1. Burns that affect the airway are very serious. Inhalation burns are life threatening, call emergency services immediately.
2. Lungs and related areas can be burned by fumes. This requires immediate medical attention.
3. A circle burn affects the skin surrounding a part of the body. As the swelling increases, it can hinder circulation. Treat the burn and call the emergency services.

## 5 Degrees of Burn Severity

1. The severity of a burn injury depends on the part of the body that is affected and the damage caused by burn (for reference, 1% of body's skin surface is equal to the palm of hand).
2. The following cases should be referred to a hospital:
  - Superficial burns affecting 5+% of body surface.
  - Partial thickness burns that affect 1+% of body surface.
  - Any kind of full thickness burns.
  - Burns affecting children.
  - Burn cases affecting feet, hands, face, and genitals.
  - Burns covering a limb.
  - Burns with different depth patterns.
  - Any kind of electrical burn.
  - Airway burns.

**Note:** If you are unsure about severity of a burn, it's important to refer victim for proper medical assistance.



**DISCLAIMER:** The information in this poster is not a substitute for proper first aid training.

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