

# Minor burns and scalds

Plastic Surgery and  
Burns Department

Patient information for adults and children

You have been treated for a minor burn or scald. If you need to return for treatment, you will be advised of this.



## Burns to the body, arms or legs

Burns in these areas are treated with special dressings, these help to reduce the chance of infection.

### You should:

- Keep the dressing clean and dry
- Take painkillers such as Paracetamol if necessary. Stronger painkillers such as Ibuprofen or Codeine may be needed.
- Keep the burnt area elevated as much as possible.
- Keep moving any joints near the burn to help reduce stiffness.

## What to look out for

You should contact the department if any of the following occur:

- Your dressing gets wet or falls off
- You feel ill, have a high temperature or develop a rash
- The burn becomes swollen
- The burn becomes more painful
- The area of redness around the wound gets bigger

## Burns to the hands and feet

- The general advice for these burns is the same as for burns to the body, arms or legs.
- It is very important to keep these areas moving to reduce stiffness and also elevate to reduce swelling and pain.

## Burns to the face

Burns to the face are usually left open. You may be given a cream to apply to keep the skin moist while it heals. Petroleum Jelly (such as Vaseline) can also be used for this.

You should apply it three to four times a day until the burn has healed. You should also:

- Wash your face with water daily or before applying further ointments.
- **Do not** use perfumed soap.
- **Do not** smoke whilst using Vaseline/ Petroleum Jelly.

## Aftercare

Although the skin may appear discoloured for several months, your burn should be healed within about two weeks. Contact the department if the burn has not healed after this time.

The healed skin will probably be sensitive to sunlight for several months after a burn. You should always cover up the area where possible, and use a HIGH factor sunblock for at least two summers.

Use of moisturisers and massage will help improve your burn over time.

## Useful numbers

- **Plastics Dressing Clinic: 01642 835904**  
Open Monday to Friday 8am-4.45pm, Saturday and Sunday 8am-12pm
- **Ward 35: 01642 854535**  
Out of hours - Adult
- **Ward 22: 01642 854522**  
Out of hours - Children

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**Switchboard: 01642 850850**

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