

BURNS

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Heat/Thermal burns - too much heat applied to the body i.e. open flames, fire, stoves or car engines, even friction.

First Aid:

- ESM, scene survey, primary survey
- cool the burn right away, pour cool water on area, cover it with clean wet cloth. Cool until pain is lessened and burn is cooled to reduce temperature or casualty tells you that they feel numbness in the area due to the cold water.
- Loosen anything that is tight as long as it is not stuck to the burn
- When pain is not as bad cover burn loosely
- Continue with care until help arrives
- If your clothes catch fire, stop moving, drop to the ground and roll several times to put flames out.
- Exit a smoke filled room if you can by covering your mouth and nose with a damp cloth. Hot smoke rises, so keep your head low as you crawl under the smoke to get out.
- In the event of a fire, get out by taking the stairs not the elevator. On your way out, pull the fire alarm if it is not sounding. If you are trapped in a burning building, seal the room you are in with tape around the door, place a wet towel around the bottom of the door, close and seal air vents, keep low to the ground, place a sign in the window with the words help, and cover your mouth and nose with a wet/damp cloth.

Chemical burns - are serious as they continue to burn as long as they remain on the skin i.e. acids, alkalies, phenols and phosphorus. In the home i.e. paint stripper, oven cleaner, drain cleaner and rust remover.

First Aid:

- ESM, scene survey, primary survey
- Remove chemical from body, flushing the area with large amount of water
- Continue flushing area for 15-20 minutes
- Cover burn afterwards loosely
- Continue to give care until help arrives

Important Note - You must always know what chemicals you are working with before an accident occurs. While most chemicals can be flushed with water, some cannot and may even burn more when added to water such as drain cleaners. Read the labels and in the workplace your Materials Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals before using them.

Electrical burns - from current, electricity, wire, plug etc.

First Aid:

- ESM, scene survey. Make sure there is no other electricity danger. Don't put yourself in danger
- Do a primary survey, give first aid for life-threatening injuries
- Secondary survey to locate burns and any fractures, dislocations, etc.
- Give first aid for the entry and exit burns by covering them with clean, dry dressings
- Give first aid for any fractures or dislocations
- Continue to give care until help arrives.

Radiation burns - can be in form of a sunburn i.e. x-rays, welding, other radioactive material. In addition to the burn caused by the radioactive material, there is also the concern of radioactive contamination of the casualty and others in the immediate vicinity of the accident. Medical attention must be obtained.

Severity of burn depends on;

- The depth of the burn, degree of the burn
- Amount of body surface burned
- Part of the body that is burned
- Age and physical condition of the casualty

1st degree burn - only the top layer of the skin is damaged

- Skin color is pink to red
- Slight swelling
- Skin is dry
- Tenderness to severe pain in the injured area

2nd degree burn - both layer of the skin are damaged

- Skin looks raw and is mottled red
- Moist skin white to cherry red colored
- Blisters that contain clear fluid
- Extreme pain

3rd degree burn - the full thickness of the skin, including tissues under the skin are damaged.

- Skin is pearly-white, tan even charred black
- Skin is dry and leathery
- See blood vessels and bones under the skin
- Little or no pain b/c nerves are destroyed

Do not breathe on, cough over or touch burned area

Do not break blisters

Do not remove clothing that is stuck to burns

Do not use lotions, butter, oil etc.

Do not cover a burn with cotton, wool or other fluffy material

Do not use adhesive dressings

Do not cool casualty too much, you will need to keep them warm once burnt area is cool