

FIRST AID FACT SHEET

Burns and Scalds

Burns and scalds are damage to the skin caused by heat. A burn is caused by dry heat and a scald is caused by something wet and hot. Burns can also affect the respiratory system and the eyes.

Caused by

- + Heat (thermal).
- + Fire or radiant heat such as an electric cooker.
- + Hot liquid and steam.
- + Radiation from the sun.
- + Chemicals - corrosive substances.
- + Electricity.
- + Friction, such as a rope burn.

Signs & symptoms

Superficial burn or scald

- + Skin is red and painful, may blister and swell.

Deep burn or scald

- + Skin is white, dark red or charred.
- + No pain where nerve endings have been destroyed.
- + Usually surrounded by superficial burns.

What to do

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan.
2. **If clothing is on fire: STOP-DROP-ROLL**
 - + **Stop** the casualty from moving around.
 - + **Drop** the casualty to the ground and wrap in a blanket or similar.
 - + **Roll** the casualty along the ground until flames are smothered.
3. Assess the adequacy of the casualty's airway and breathing.
4. Cool the burnt area with copious amounts of cool water for up to twenty (20) minutes.
5. Remove any clothing and jewellery from affected area unless stuck to the burn.
6. Cover burnt area with a light non-stick dressing or clean, dry non-fluffy material.
7. Rest and reassure the casualty and check for shock.
8. Call **Triple Zero (000)** if:
 - + Burns involving airway, hands, feet, face or genitals.
 - + Deep burn.
 - + Superficial burn larger than twenty (20) cent piece on an adult or ten (10) cent piece on a child.
 - + If in any doubt of what to do.

DO NOT

- + Peel off clothing that is stuck to the skin.
- + Use ice or iced water to cool a burn.
- + Apply lotions, ointments or creams.
- + Break blisters.



In a medical emergency
call **Triple Zero (000)**

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