

Self-care Information

Minor Burns or Scalds

Tips on how you can treat minor burns or scalds at home

“Supporting you to look after you”

Key advice:

- Cool the burn with cool or lukewarm water for 20 minutes.
- Remove any clothing or jewellery from the burnt area, unless it is stuck to the skin.
- Do not apply creams or greasy substances.
- Cover the wound with a non-stick dressing until it is healed. Your local pharmacy can advise on suitable dressings.

A **burn** is caused by a dry heat, such as an iron or fire. A **scald** is caused by something wet, such as hot water or steam.

A minor burn or scald affects the outer layers of skin. The skin will be red, or pale pink, slightly swollen and painful. There may be some small blisters.

How do I treat a minor burn or scald?

You could try

- ✓ Cooling the burn with cool or lukewarm running water for 20 minutes.
- ✓ Removing any clothing or jewellery that's near the burnt area of skin, including babies' nappies - but don't move anything that's stuck to the skin.
- ✓ Keeping your wound covered with a non-stick dressing until it heals. Cling-film can be used at first.
- ✓ Taking simple over the counter pain relief like paracetamol or ibuprofen.
- ✓ If your burn is over a joint, keep the injured parts moving to help prevent stiffness and tightening of the new skin.



Try not to

- ✗ Burst blisters.
- ✗ Use ice, or iced water.
- ✗ Move anything that is stuck to the skin.
- ✗ Use any creams or greasy substances such as butter.



Visit the hospital Emergency Department for:

- All chemical and electrical burns.
- Large or deep burns—any burn bigger than your hand.
- Burns that cause white or charred skin—any size.
- Burns that cause blisters on the face, hands, arms, feet, legs or genitals.



See your GP or call 111 if:

- The burn hasn't healed or there are still blisters after 2 weeks.
- The wound becomes **hot, red** or **swollen**, as this may mean that the wound is infected.
- A child under 5 has a burn or scald.
- You are pregnant.

If someone has breathed in smoke or fumes, they should also seek medical attention. Some symptoms may be delayed and can include:

- Coughing
- A sore throat
- Difficulty breathing
- Facial burns

Here are some useful links to further information

NHS Website	https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/burns-and-scalds/
Patient Website	https://patient.info/skin-conditions/burns-and-scalds-leaflet
Or visit your local pharmacy for advice	

