



Minor burns: aftercare advice

Information for patients from the Emergency Department

This leaflet has been given to help you and / or your relative to look after the burn injury.

Treatment received:

(Clinician will mark and explain as appropriate)

Painkillers (type)

- ☐ Tetanus given / up to date
- ☐ Blisters removed
- ☐ Burn cleaned with
- ☐ Dressings applied (type)

Dressings

- Dressings protect the burn injury and help with healing.
- Please keep dressings clean and dry and leave in place unless otherwise advised.
- Please find specific information and advice about the dressing below (for example, waterproof, odour, colour, anti-microbial).

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- The dressing needs to be changed every days until the injury is healed.

Change of dressing will be done by (mark as appropriate):

- ☐ You - dressings supplied
- ☐ GP practice nurse - please book your own appointment in advance
- ☐ Dressing clinic (if provided in local Emergency Department or Urgent Treatment Centre) - please book your own appointment in advance
- ☐ Community / District / Outreach nurse - referral to be organised by clinician

Your dressing will require changing sooner if:

- fluid seeps through the dressing
- it becomes wet
- it begins to peel / fall off.

If your burn injury is not healed (or nearly healed) by 10 days, please ask to be referred to your local specialist burns service (if not attending there already).

You have a follow-up appointment on:

Date:

Time:

Place:

Concerns

Seek medical advice early if you experience any of the following signs or symptoms.

- Worsening or uncontrollable pain
- Offensive smell from the burn injury
- Redness / swelling / heat surrounding the burn injury

If you experience any of the following, please contact your local specialist burns service or Emergency Department immediately.

- You feel ill / develop a temperature (fever above 38°C)
- Diarrhoea (poo is loose / runny and watery)
- Vomiting
- Not passing as much urine as normal
- "Not well" / "Not yourself"
- Rash

Looking after your healing burn

Pain

- Take painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen regularly to relieve the pain. Always check the packaging to make sure that you take the correct dosage.
- Take painkillers 30 minutes before a dressing change to ease discomfort.
- Raise the affected arm / leg, when possible, to help to reduce swelling, which will reduce pain.

Nutrition

- Eating and drinking a well-balanced diet helps us to stay healthy and our body to heal after injury.
- If you are underweight or follow a severely restrictive diet, please tell your GP as this could impact on your healing.
- Fluid can be lost from the burn, so it is important to keep hydrated. Aim to drink at least 6 to 8 cups each day.

Skin care

- Proper aftercare of your skin is very important to restore the skin's function, reduce pain, itch and swelling.
- Moisturise regularly with a non-perfumed moisturiser, such as aqueous cream, to soften the skin, prevent dryness and reduce feelings of tightness.
- Once the dressings have been removed, you can bath again. Use a non-perfumed gentle soap at first.
- Avoid exposing the burn to any direct sun either by covering up with clothes or using sun block (UVB protection) or factor 50 sunscreen (UVA protection), especially in the first two years after burn injury. Sun cream may be available on prescription.

Return to work or usual daily activities

- Return to work depends on the location and healing of the burn injury, as well as the type of work you do.
- You may be able to return to work on restricted duties before coming back to full duties. You will be guided by the Burns team.
- We want you to get back to being as close to your old self as possible. Therefore, it is important to continue with your usual level of exercise and activities as far as your healed injury allows.
- If you have been given exercises by the physiotherapist or occupational therapist, it is important to do these as instructed, to get the best results.

Smoking

Your burn injury will take longer to heal and have a higher chance of infection and scarring if you smoke. If you normally smoke, it is important to try to reduce or stop.

Further information and advice

- London and South East Burn Network (<https://www.lsebn.nhs.uk>)
- NHS 111

Support groups

- Changing Faces (<https://www.changingfaces.org.uk>)
- Dan's Fund for Burns (<https://www.dansfundforburns.org>)
- Katie Piper Foundation (<https://www.katiepiperfoundation.org.uk>)

[Web sites last accessed 8th October 2025]

What do you think of this leaflet?

We welcome feedback, whether positive or negative, as it helps us to improve our care and services.

If you would like to give us feedback about this leaflet, please fill in our short online survey. Either scan the QR code below, or use the web link. We do not record your personal information, unless you provide contact details and would like to talk to us some more.

Giving feedback about this leaflet



<https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MDOBU4/>

If you would rather talk to someone instead of filling in a survey, please call the Patient Voice Team.

- **Patient Voice Team**
Telephone: 01227 868605
Email (ekhuft.patientvoice@nhs.net)

This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.

Please let us know:

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

You can let us know this by:

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email (ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net).

Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital. Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

Further patient information leaflets are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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