

Quick Guide for School Staff

BURNS AND SCALDS

Burns and scalds are among the most common injuries that show up in the first-aid room. They can look and feel alarming, but a calm, quick response makes an enormous difference.

What to do in the first few minutes

1. Remove the pupil from the source of heat
2. Cool with cool or lukewarm running water for 20 minutes
3. Reassure the pupil throughout and explain what you are doing
4. Remove clothing or jewellery near the burn – but never anything stuck to the skin
5. Keep the rest of the body warm with a blanket or extra layers
6. Cover with a clean dressing or cling film if no dressing is available

Cool, Call, Cover

Cool the burn with cool or lukewarm running water for 20 minutes as soon as possible.

Call for help for any burn larger than a 50p coin, or if you're unsure: 999, 111, or your school's first aid lead.

Cover the affected area with clean dressing.

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Some things to avoid:

- Do not delay cooling the burn – start running cool or lukewarm water over it as soon as possible.
- Never use ice, iced water, creams, or greasy substances
- Do not remove anything stuck to the burn, including clothing or jewellery
- Do not use plasters or sticky dressings to cover the burn or scald
- Do not burst any blisters or allow the pupil to do so – this increases the risk of infection

Seek urgent medical advice if

- The burn is larger than the pupil's hand
- The burn or scald is deep and causes white or charred skin, or the pupil cannot feel sensation in the burnt area
- The burn is on the face, neck, hands, feet, a joint, or genitals
- The burn was caused by chemicals or electricity
- The pupil shows signs of shock, such as cold or clammy skin, rapid breathing, dizziness, or weakness
- The pupil is under five years old, as their skin is thinner and more vulnerable to serious injury

If you're unsure about the severity of a burn or scald, seek medical advice. When in doubt, it's always safer to treat it as serious.