

## **PATIENT INFORMATION – BURNS**

Special dressings have been used to dress the burns. The dressings help to stop germs getting into the burns. It is important to keep the dressing dry, clean and undisturbed until you are seen again in the hospital or by your own GP.

### **Return to the Accident and Emergency Department promptly if:**

- The dressing becomes soaked with fluid leaking from the wound
- The dressing accidentally becomes wet
- You feel ill
- You develop a high temperature (fever) of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher
- The wound becomes more painful or smelly
- There is an increased swelling of the area or limb
- The wound has not healed after two weeks
- You have any other concerns about your wound

It usually takes around 14 days for minor burns to heal with minimal scarring.

### **Pain**

You will have been given painkillers to take if the burn is painful. If you run out of these you may take simple painkillers such as \*paracetamol, which you can get from a chemist without prescription. If you have burnt a limb, you will find that keeping the burned area as high as possible will also help relieve discomfort.

### **Burns to hands and feet**

These may be treated with a special cream in a plastic bag. This is done so you can move your fingers and toes. The skin will probably become white and soggy. This is normal and nothing to worry about. It will settle once the bag is removed. It is important to exercise your fingers or toes inside the bag.

## **BURNS CONT.**

### **Burns to the face**

These are usually left open. You may be given a cream to apply to prevent drying of the skin. Some of these creams can make the skin go dark, this is quite usual and will quickly be back to normal once the cream is stopped.

### **Aftercare**

Even after the damaged skin has healed, it may be particularly sensitive to strong sunlight for many months. You should use a very high factor sun-cream or sun-block on the affected area, especially if it is to be exposed to strong sun or a sun lamp within 6 months of the burn.

### **Further Advice/Instructions**

Please use this section to give the patient specific information e.g. follow up appointments or after care advice.

### **\*Pain relief advice**

You may have been given some pain relief by the health professionals in the Accident and Emergency Department. If this runs out and you need further pain relief, you can speak to a pharmacist for advice. Some common painkillers are available to buy over the counter, for e.g. paracetamol or ibuprofen. Always follow the instructions on the packet if you are taking these, and seek further advice from the pharmacist should you have any concerns, particularly if it is for a child.



If you become unwell or are injured, choose the right NHS service to make sure you get the best treatment. The Choose Well campaign explains what each NHS service does, and when it should be used.

Choosing well means that you and your family will get the best treatment. It also allows busy NHS services to help the people who need them most.

If you are unsure about which option to choose, please call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 46 47 or visit the choose well website at [www.choosewellwales.org.uk](http://www.choosewellwales.org.uk)

This information has been produced based on previous information leaflets and the evidence available at the time of publication. It has been clinically reviewed however if you notice anything that needs updating or amending please contact [ppi.team@wales.nhs.uk](mailto:ppi.team@wales.nhs.uk)

If you require this information in another language or format please ask a member of staff.

For further advice or information contact NHS Direct Wales 0845 46 47  
[www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk)