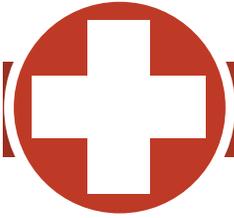




RISK REMINDER

PARTNERING WITH TOWNSHIPS



First Aid for Minor Burns

Burns can be caused by heat, electricity, chemicals, or radiation. How serious a burn is depends on how many layers of skin are burned and where the burn is located. First degree burns are painful. They damage just the outer layers of skin, which become red and slightly swollen. There may be a few mild blisters. Second degree burns are much more painful. The “underskin” is burned as well as the top layer, and there is usually blistering and swelling. The skin may be wet and shiny, and clear fluid may ooze. Third degree burns are the most serious because skin is destroyed. The victim may not feel pain in the area if nerve endings are destroyed. The burned area may be white, gray, or charred.

A Minor Burn

There are three kinds of burns: minor, moderate, and critical. A burn is called minor if it is first degree, or if it is second degree but covers 15% or less of the person’s body. Even a third degree burn can be minor if it’s covering just 2% of the body (like a small splash of chemical on someone’s leg.) An important exception to this rule is any burn on the hands, feet, face, or genitals. If these areas are affected, the burn is generally considered moderate or critical.

Rules for Minor Burns

It’s always important to eliminate the cause of the burn and to cool the area as quickly as possible. Even with a minor burn the person can go into shock. Symptoms of shock include cold or clammy skin, weakness, nausea, and rapid pulse. If you notice these symptoms, keep the person comfortably warm (not hot) and lying down, and get medical help immediately.

Never use neutralizers, ointments, butter or any other substance unless you are told to by a chemical professional. Don’t try to clean or scrub the skin, and never break blisters. To flush a burn, use any running water you can find. After flushing, cover the burn with a sterile dressing.



Special Rules: Thermal (Heat) Burns

Rinse the area without scrubbing or immerse in cool water (you can add ice to the water) until the pain goes away. Then pat the burn dry with sterile gauze or bandage and keep it covered.

Special Rules: Chemical Burns

If you can find the container, follow directions on the label. For burns caused by a dry chemical like lye, brush the chemical off the skin and then flush for 15-20 minutes. For acid chemicals, flush the area immediately for 15-20 minutes. If a chemical burns someone’s eyes, first flush the eyes for 30 minutes and then get emergency medical treatment.



Special Rules: Electrical Burns

Avoid any contact with the electric current while you remove the victim from it. Make sure the victim’s breathing and heartbeat are regular. Treat for shock and get medical attention if necessary. Check the places where the electricity entered and left the body. Treat minor burns there with cool water.