

Contact details

Care of Burns in Scotland (COBIS)
National Managed Clinical Network

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Notes

Electrical Burn Injury Information Leaflet



**Plastics Directorate
Specialist Services**

Damage is caused by either the generation of heat during passage of the current or direct tissue damage. Our aim is to repair any damage, close the wound(s), prevent joint stiffness and encourage functional recovery with good cosmetic results.

Information that is required by the medical/nursing staff

- It is important that you tell the doctor what was the source of the injury and the voltage of the source if known
- The time you were exposed to the electrical source, for how long and if you lost consciousness at any time
- If you carried out any first aid following the injury and for how long and what did you use

What to expect

The doctor will ask you about your injury and about you. They will need to know about any medication that you are prescribed and about your medical history. We may have a clinical photograph of the injury.

Electrical injuries sometimes disrupt the normal rhythm of the heart, so it may be necessary to admit you to the ward, to monitor you. You will be reviewed by the medical team on a daily basis and your treatment will be discussed with you.

Following discussion with you, the doctor will decide on the plan of treatment for you. You may need surgery to repair any damage as a result of the injury. This plan may involve the intervention of the physiotherapist to encourage you to maintain a full range of movement to the affected area; this will help reduce swelling, maintain joint mobility and prevent skin tightening.

The occupational therapist may be asked to apply splinting to the affected area to assist in reducing the swelling and also preserve function by proper body alignment and the use of anti contracture positioning. The nursing staff will care for you throughout your stay; they will also be assessing your injury and choosing appropriate dressings to heal the wound.

Important points

Please ensure that you:

- Follow any instructions requested by the medical/nursing team
- Elevate the injured area, to allow any swelling to settle
- You drink plenty of fluids if you are not being taken to the operating theatre
- Eat a diet rich in proteins and green vegetables
- Do not allow the wound to dry out
- Protect the wound from infection
- Keep the injured area moving, through a full range of movement as instructed by the physiotherapy/nursing team

It may be helpful to talk through the events of the injury. We do have clinical psychologists available for that purpose. You may not think you need to talk when you are in hospital but if you change your mind when you go home then please do not hesitate to contact the department.

If you have any questions then please ask a member of staff