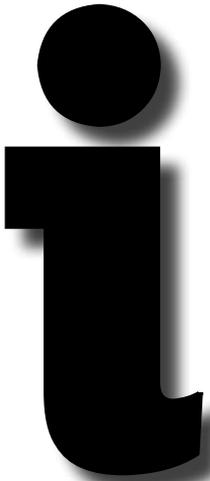


Looking after your facial burn (adults) (page 1 of 2)



If you need your information in another language or medium (audio, large print, etc) please contact Customer Care on 0800 374 208 or send an email to: customer care@salisbury.nhs.uk

You are entitled to a copy of any letter we write about you. Please ask if you want one when you come to the hospital.

If you are unhappy with the advice you have been given by your GP, consultant, or another healthcare professional, you may ask for a second (or further) opinion.

The evidence used in the preparation of this leaflet is available on request. Please email: patient.information@salisbury.nhs.uk if you would like a reference list.

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- Skin acts as a barrier against infection and moisture loss. A burn injury destroys these functions of the skin. It is important for you to follow the advice given in this leaflet to promote healing, prevent complications and minimise scarring.
- Burn wounds need a moist (not wet) environment to heal, so you will be given liquid paraffin, yellow soft paraffin (Vaseline) or an ointment to apply to the affected areas.
- Inflammation and swelling occurs as a natural response to healing, but this can be limited by remaining upright (for example sleeping propped up).
- If your eyes and/or surrounding areas are affected, you will be referred to an ophthalmologist for further advice and treatment.
- Superficial burns will usually heal within 14 days.

How to look after your face

1. **Wash hands** with warm soapy water and dry with a clean towel.
2. **Clean face** with mild, non-perfumed soap and water.
It is important to wash the burn with mild soap and/or running water to remove the residue and allow the skin to breathe before you re-apply the paraffin/ointment. Using a clean and soft face cloth may help remove any debris and residual cream. This can be done as often as two hourly but the washing frequency will decrease as the exudate (ooze) decreases.
3. **Men should shave** if necessary.
Hair and its follicles tend to harbour bacteria that can slow healing and lead to infection. It is important to shave facial hair. Use a disposable razor or clippers to shave facial and scalp hair. Ensure hair is removed at least 2.5cm around the edge of the burn.
4. **Apply liquid paraffin or gel** on to the burn using gauze.
Apply a thin layer of paraffin or ointment to the burn using gauze. This will help keep the facial wounds moist and comfortable. This can be done as often as two hourly to minimise crusting.
It is important to remember that liquid paraffin is flammable so you must not smoke when this is on.
5. **Avoid getting liquid paraffin in the eyes or mouth.**
Vaseline (yellow soft paraffin) may be applied to the lips.
6. **Apply a non-perfumed moisturiser to adjacent, unaffected skin.**
Do not apply this to any areas where there is unhealed, broken skin.

Follow-up

On discharge, you will be given a follow up appointment for our Burns Clinic, which is a nurse-led clinic. If you are unable to make your appointment please contact the Burns Unit to rearrange it. These appointments enable us to not only assess the healing, but also offer advice, in particular regarding scarring. We can refer you to our scar management clinic if required.

If there are any concerns regarding restricted movements, you will also be seen by a therapist and given advice for facial exercises.

Smoking will affect your healing process and could make you more susceptible to infection. If you need any help or support to stop smoking then please ask at your GP's surgery.

If you experience increased pain, redness or fever following discharge, please contact the Burns Unit, your GP or your local Emergency Department as soon as possible.

Once fully healed, a non-perfumed hypoallergenic moisturiser should be applied at least twice a day to maintain skin health. Remember to cleanse the face between applications. Depending on the severity of your burn, it may be necessary to continue moisturising for up to 12 months.

After a burn injury, you should avoid exposing the damaged skin to direct sunlight as this may cause it to blister, even in the winter months. New skin is especially sensitive during the first year after the injury. Wearing a peaked cap or wide-brimmed hat when you're out in the sun is recommended, along with a high factor sun block with both UVA and UVB protection.

Any questions? Call the Burns Unit on  01722 345507.

Useful websites

www.bugssalisbury.co.uk

www.changingfaces.org.uk

www.burnsurvivorsassociation.com

www.dansfundforburns.org

www.katiepiperfoundation.org.uk