

First Aid For Chemical Burns

WHAT ARE CHEMICAL BURNS?

Chemical burns are injuries to the skin or eyes caused by contact with strong chemicals such as acids, alkalis, or cleaning products.

1

ENSURE SAFETY

- A** Protect yourself first: Wear gloves and other personal protective equipment (PPE) if available to avoid exposure.
- B** Remove the person from the source of exposure to a safe area if it is safe to do so.



2

REMOVE CONTAMINANTS

- A** Immediately remove contaminated clothing and jewellery from the affected area.
- B** If the chemical is a dry powder, brush it off the skin before flushing with water, taking care not to spread it to other areas



3

IRRIGATE WITH WATER

- A** Flush the affected area with copious amounts of cool running water for at least 20 minutes (up to 60 minutes for some chemicals or until stinging stops).
- B** Use a shower if a large area is involved.
- C** For chemical burns to the eye, hold the eyelid open and flush the eye with water for as long as tolerated, ensuring the affected eye is lower to prevent contamination of the other eye.



4

DO NOT ATTEMPT NEUTRALISATION

Do not try to neutralise acids or alkalis with other chemicals, as this can worsen the injury



5

SEEK EXPERT ADVICE AND MEDICAL HELP

- A** Call the Poisons Information Centre (Australia: 13 11 26) for specific guidance about the chemical involved.
- B** Refer to the chemical's Safety Data Sheet (SDS) or container label for first aid instructions if available.
- C** **Call 000** for an ambulance if the burn is significant, covers a large area, involves the face, eyes, genitals, hands, feet, or joints, or if the person is unwell.

