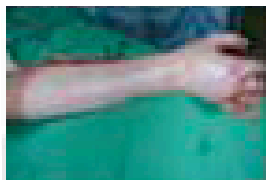


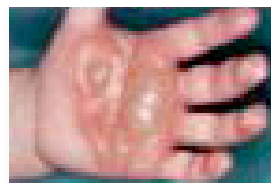
# MINOR BURNS



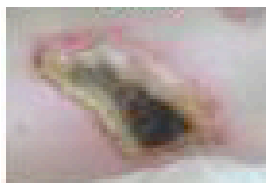
*Epidermal*



*Deep dermal*



*Superficial dermal*



*Full thickness*

Epidermal burns involve only the top layer of skin (the epidermis). They are red and do not blister on the first day.

Superficial dermal burns involve part of the next layer of skin (the dermis). They are pink, painful and moist. Blisters can occur within hours. The skin can grow back in three weeks, but it may be a slightly different colour.

Deep dermal burns involve all but the deepest layer of the dermis, leaving few hair follicles or pain sensors. They are pale pink with large blisters that can rupture early. They may require a skin graft.

Full thickness burns are white and charred with no sensation or blood flow.

## Scenario

A cook in the cafeteria spilt hot oil on her forearm while cooking chips. She has run directly to the medical centre, and arrives five minutes after the incident.

## Task

Some of you will be shown pictures of burns this month. You will need to describe the extent and depth of the wounds, initial treatment, when to refer, and possible dressings.

Talk to your colleagues before then to check your understanding.

## Questions

How do you tell the difference between superficial dermal and deep dermal burns?

Why are burns always reassessed after 48 hours?

## Step-by-step

- ★ **Irrigate area with cool water for at least 20 minutes. Irrigate chemical burns longer.**
- ★ **Provide pain relief.**
- ★ **Clean the burn with a water-based disinfectant or soap and water.**
- ★ **Refer to hospital immediately if the burn**
  - **Involves greater than 3% of the skin (Don't include skin that is just red);**
  - **Involves face, hands, perineum or skin flexures (including neck and armpit);**
  - **Is circumferential, deep partial thickness or full thickness;**
  - **Is due to electricity, chemicals or high pressure steam.**
- ★ **For epidermal or superficial dermal burns**
  - **Apply a simple non-adherent dressing;**
  - **Ensure tetanus immunity;**
  - **Reassess in 48 hours.**