Chemical Burn Treatment

Most people with chemical burns do not need to be admitted. Most can go home after arranging follow-up care with their doctor. In severe cases, however, they may need to be admitted to a hospital.

Self-Care at Home

Begin basic first aid. Immediately call 911 if you have a severe injury, any shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, or other symptoms throughout your body. If you are aiding an injured person with these symptoms, lay the person down and immediately call 911.

- Remove yourself or the victim from the accident area.
- Remove any contaminated clothing.
- Wash the injured area to dilute or remove the substance, using large volumes of water. Wash for at least 20 minutes, taking care not to allow runoff to contact unaffected parts of your body. Gently brush away any solid materials, again avoiding unaffected body surfaces.
- Especially wash away any chemical in your eye. Sometimes the best way to get large amounts of water to your eye is to step into the shower.

Medical Treatment

- Intravenous fluids may be needed to normalize blood pressure and heart rate.
- Intravenous access may also be used for any medications needed to treat pain or protect against infection.
- Decontamination will begin (likely water irrigation).
- You will be given any antidote to counteract the chemical, if appropriate.
- Antibiotics often are not needed for minor chemical burns.
- Wounds will be cleaned and bandaged with medicated creams and sterile wraps as needed.
- Consultation with other medical specialists may be done if indicated.
- Pain in a burn can often be severe. Adequate pain control will be addressed by your doctor.
If there is any indication of breathing problems, a breathing tube may be placed in your airway to help.


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