

# Prevention of Heat Pack Burns

## Factsheet

- Whilst heat packs (containing wheat or other grain) are seen as a better option than hot water bottles, care must be taken to avoid burn injuries\*.
- People with little or no sensation, particularly in their feet, are more likely to sustain heat pack related burns.

**Babies, young children and the elderly have fragile skin and their skin burns deeper and more quickly than adults and at lower temperatures**

\*Australian & New Zealand Standard™ “Microwavable heat packs: wheat and other organic filling materials”



- ✓ Do follow manufacturer’s instructions.
- ✓ Do check material and seams for wearing and damage and replace pack when needed.
- ✓ Do use care when removing the heat pack from microwave as it will be hot
- ✓ Do take the pack out and check the temperature before heating further
- ✓ Cover pack with a towel or blanket to prevent contact burns



- ✗ Do not heat the pack in the microwave for more than 30 seconds at a time.
- ✗ Do not apply the heat pack directly onto the skin.
- ✗ Do not sleep with a heat pack as sustained contact may cause severe burns
- ✗ Do not use on skin which doesn’t have normal feeling



### First Aid for Burns

If you, or someone you know is burnt, take the following actions:

1. Remove clothing and jewellery
2. Apply cool running water to the burn for **20 minutes** (effective up to 3 hours after injury)

Spraying water or alternating wet cloths can help if limited water  
If no water available a hydrogel burn first aid dressing can be used until water available.

Caution use on large %TBSA due to hypothermia

**Do NOT use ice, butter, creams or alternatives**

3. Cover burn with clean cloth and keep the patient warm
4. Seek medical attention for any burn bigger than 3cm; or with blisters; or if any other concerns