

# Prevention of Aerosol Cold Burns (“Frosty”)

## Factsheet

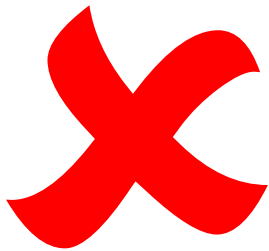
- Aerosol cold burns occur when pressurised gas within an aerosol spray cools quickly on exit from the aerosol applicator and is in close or direct contact with skin for a prolonged period of time. Deodorants and air fresheners are the most common cause but asthma inhalers can also cause injury.
- Aerosol cold burns cause an injury similar to frost bite and are commonly known as a “frosty” or “frosting”.
- Children or teenagers may use these to cause deliberate burns<sup>1</sup> but may not be aware of the risks. Intentional burns are reasonably uncommon\*.
- These burns can be deep and may require surgery or a skin graft to heal depending on exposure time of the aerosol to the skin.

<sup>1</sup> If this type of injury is as a result of emotional distress or mental health issue please seek assistance or report to appropriate authority (i.e. Lifeline/Beyond Blue or DoCS)

\*Data obtained from Burns Registry of Australia and New Zealand (BRANZ) 2018



- ✓ Do keep aerosol sprays approximately 15cms away from skin when using.
- ✓ Do use aerosol cans as per manufacturer instructions.
- ✓ Do store aerosol cans away from reach of small children
- ✓ Do use in well ventilated space.
- ✓ Do seek medical attention if blistering, pain or any break in the skin occurs.



- ✗ Do not spray aerosol close to or directly on to the skin.
- ✗ Do not spray aerosol for a prolonged period of time onto one area of skin.
- ✗ Do not breathe or inhale aerosol fumes.
- ✗ Do not place aerosol can near open flame because of explosion risk.



### First Aid for Cold Burns

If someone gets a cold burn, take the following actions:

1. **PLEASE NOTE:** the usual recommendations for burns first aid (20 minutes of cool running water) is contraindicated in cold burns
2. **Rapid re-warming in a bath of water between 37-40°C for 15-30 minutes**
3. Active motion (avoid massaging) whilst rewarming is recommended
4. Cover burn with clean cloth and keep the patient warm  
**Do NOT use ice, butter, creams, etc**
5. Seek medical attention for any burn bigger than 3cm, or with blisters, or if any other concerns are present