

Electric Shock

FIRST AID FACT SHEET

How to treat electric shock

An electric shock occurs when a person comes into contact with an electrical energy source. Electrical energy flows through a portion of the body causing a shock. Exposure to electrical energy may result in a life-threatening situation as there may be damage to internal organs.

What to do

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Check for danger to yourself and bystanders.
3. Switch off the power if possible.
4. If safe to do so, remove the casualty from the electrical supply without directly touching them. Use non-conductive, dry materials, for example, a dry wooden broom handle.
5. Cool any burnt areas with copious amounts of cool water for up to twenty (20) minutes.
6. Remove any clothing and jewellery from the affected area unless stuck to the burn.
7. Cover burnt area with a light non-stick dressing or clean, dry non-fluffy material.
8. Reassure the casualty.
9. Always seek medical aid immediately for electrical burns. Call **Triple Zero (000)** for an ambulance.

Downed power lines

When calling Triple Zero (000) advise that there are downed cables.

Phone Western Power on 13 13 51 (tel: 13 13 51) to report a fallen powerline and to make the area safe.

Remain at least 8 metres from any cable and do not approach until advised that it is safe to do so.

DO NOT attempt to remove the cable.

If a vehicle is being touched by a high voltage cable, DO NOT go near the vehicle or try to remove the casualty from the vehicle.

Advise the casualty not to move.

Caused by

Electricity (either high voltage or prolonged current) passing through the body.

Signs and symptoms

Sudden collapse after touching anything electrical.

Burns, particularly entry and exit burns where the electricity entered and left the body which may be deep.

Unconsciousness.

Not breathing normally.

A weak, erratic pulse or no pulse at all.

Cardiac arrest.