

# Electrical Injury

## Definition

- An electrical injury from touching electricity.

## Health Information

### Types

- **Household low voltage electrical injury.** This is the most common type of electrical injury. It happens when an object is put in an electrical outlet. These injuries are most often not serious.
- **High voltage electrical injury.** High voltage wires from power lines carry much more electricity. Contact with these is life threatening.

### Symptoms

- An electric shock causes a quick jolting feeling.
- Tingling, numbness, or pain is common after the shock.

## Care Advice

### 1. Key Points

- Household electrical injuries rarely cause serious injury.
- Common symptoms are an initial jolting feeling, followed by tingling, numbness, and pain.
- Here is some home care advice that should help.

### 2. Stop the Electricity

- If the shock is from an appliance or tool, unplug it right away.
- If you can't unplug it, turn off the electricity to that area.

### 3. First Aid: Cold Water for Any Visible Burns

- Run cold tap water over any visible skin burns for 10 minutes.
- For burn treatment, see the Burns handout for details.

### 4. Pain Medicine

- Give acetaminophen every 4 hours or ibuprofen every 6 hours as needed for pain.

### 5. Prevent Household Electrical Injury

- Put covers on any outlets within reach of children.
- Hide or cover any electrical cords within reach. Warning: chewing on an electrical cord can cause serious lip and mouth injuries.
- Do not use electronics, such as hairdryers, near running or standing water (sink or tub). Reason: risk of serious injury.

### 6. What to Expect

- Tingling, numbness, and pain should improve within 1 hour.

## Call Your Doctor If

- Tingling, numbness, or pain lasts more than 2 hours
- Large burn occurs
- You think your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

### **Pediatric Care Advice**

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