**必修五 Unit5**

**FIRST AID FOR BURNS**

The skin is an essential part of your body and its largest organ. You have three layers of skin which act as a barrier against disease, poisons and the sun's harmful rays. The functions of your skin are also very complex: it keeps you warm or cool; it prevents your body from losing too much water; it is where you feel cold, heat or pain and it gives you your sense of touch. So as you can imagine, if your skin gets burned it can be very serious. First aid is a very important first step in the treatment of bums.

***Causes of burns***

You can get burned by a variety of things: hot liquids, steam, fire, radiation (by being close to high heat or fire, etc), the sun, electricity or chemicals.

***Types of burns***

There are three types of burns. Burns are called first, second or third degree burns, depending on which layers of the skin are burned.

◎**First degree burns** These affect only the top layer of the skin. These burns are not serious and should feel better within a day or two. Examples include mild sunburn and burns caused by touching a hot pan, stove or iron for a moment.

◎**Second degree burns** These affect both the top and the second layer of the skin. These bums are serious and take a few weeks to heal. Examples include severe sunburn and bums caused by hot liquids.

◎**Third degree burns** These affect all three layers of the skin and any tissue and organs under the skin. Examples include burns caused by electric shocks, burning clothes, or severe petrol fires. These burns cause very severe injuries and the victim must go to hospital at once.

***Characteristics of burns***

**First degree burns**

◎dry, red and mildly swollen

◎mildly painful

◎turn white when pressed

**Second degree burns**

◎rough, red and swollen

◎blisters

◎watery surface

◎extremely painful

**Third degree burns**

◎black and white and charred

◎swollen; often tissue under them can be seen

◎little or no pain if nerves are damaged;

***First aid treatment***

1 Remove clothing using scissors if necessary unless it is stuck to the burn. Take off other clothing and jewellery near the burn.

2 Cool burns immediately with cool but not icy water. It is best to place burns under gently running water for about 10 minutes. (The cool water stops the burning process, prevents the pain becoming unbearable and reduces swelling.) Do not put cold water on third degree burns.

3 For first degree burns, place cool, clean, wet cloths on them until the pain is not so bad. For second degree burns, keep cloths cool by putting them back in a basin of cold water, squeezing them out and placing them on the burned area over and over again for about an hour until the pain is not so bad.

4 Dry the burned area gently. Do not rub, as this may break any blisters and the wound may get infected.

5 Cover the burned area with a dry, clean bandage that will not stick to the skin. Hold the bandage in place with tape. Never put butter, oil or ointment on bums as they keep the heat in the wounds and may cause infection.

6 If bums are on arms or legs, keep them higher than the heart, if possible. If bums are on the face, the victim should sit up.

7 If the injuries are second or third degree bums, it is vital to get the victim to the doctor or hospital at once.