

Shocking!

Electric shock

With an electric shock, electric current passes through the body. The human body is made up of around 60% water, and fluids conduct electricity well. Direct contact with electrical current can burn the skin, cause muscle spasm, tissue damage or even cardiac arrest (failure of the heart) and death.

Examples of risks:

Damaged electrical cables or wires; old, damaged or faulty electrical devices; overheated electrical devices; wet electrical devices; overloaded electrical sockets

Key safety messages for the home and workplace:

- Make sure that you keep electrical equipment and cables in good condition.
- Always read the instructions before putting together or using a new electrical device.
- Keep all electrical devices well away from water and drinks, and make sure your hands are dry before touching them.
- Don't overload electric sockets – one plug in a socket at a time is safest.
- Remember that electrical faults or overheated devices can also cause fires. Switch them off when you've finished using them.



Basic First Aid

- The quicker you act, the better the injured person's chances of survival.
- If the person receiving the shock is still touching the electrical device, don't touch them – the electric shock could pass to you.
- Shut off the power source at the mains switch.
- Use a non-conductive material (e.g. a broom) to move the electrical equipment away from the person. It's safer if you also stand on non-conductive material (e.g. books, rubber mat, newspaper).
- Check that the person is breathing and conscious, and call the ambulance if needed.

More information about first aid can be found at the St. John Ambulance website: www.sja.org.uk