Toxic Shock Syndrome

(TSS)

Information for parents and carers

**Chelsea and Westminster Hospital**

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London  
SW10 9NH

**Switchboard:** 020 3315 8000

**W:** www.chelwest.nhs.uk

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Patient Advice & Liaison   
Service (PALS)

If you have concerns or wish to give feedback about services, your care or treatment, you can contact the PALS office on the Ground Floor of the hospital just behind the main reception.

Alternatively, you can send us your comments or suggestions on one of our comment cards, available at the PALS office, or on a feedback form on our website www.chelwest.nhs.uk/pals.

We value your opinion and invite you to provide us with feedback.

**T:** 020 3315 6727  
**E:** cwpals@chelwest.nhs.uk

Contact information

**Mars Ward**

**Paediatric Burn unit**

1st Floor, Lift bank B

369 Fulham Road

London

SW10 9NH

**T:** 020 3315 3707

020 3315 3706

We are open 24 hours, 7 days a

week.

Take this leaflet with you and show this leaflet to any medical professional who sees your child whilst they have a burn.

Symptoms of TSS

The symptoms of TSS start suddenly and get worse quickly. They might include one or more of the following symptoms:

* A high temperature of 38°C and above
* Flu-like symptoms such as a headache, feeling cold, feeling tired, aching body, a sore throat and a cough
* Feeling and being sick
* Loose stools or Diarrhoea
* A widespread sunburn-like rash
* Lips, tongue and the whites of the eyes turning bright red
* Irritability
* Eating or drinking less than usual
* Decreased normal amount of wet nappies or not using the toilet as normal
* Dizziness or fainting
* Difficulty breathing
* Confusion
* Not well or “not themselves”

Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS)

This leaflet aims to provide information for parents of children with an unhealed burn wound the signs and symptoms of TSS. The information in this leaflet will be discussed with you by one of the burns specialist nurses during your attendance at the burns unit.

What TSS?

TSS is a rare but life-threatening condition caused by bacteria getting into the body and releasing harmful toxins.

TSS gets worse very quickly and can be fatal if not treated promptly.

Causes

TSS is caused by either Staphylococcus or Streptococcus bacteria.

These bacteria normally live on the skin and in the nose or mouth without causing harm, but if they get deeper into the body they can release toxins that damage tissue and stop organs working.

Having an unhealed burn wound of any size increases your risk of getting TSS.

We strongly advise you keep a working thermometer to accurately record your child’s temperature.

What to do if your child has symptoms of TSS?

TSS is a medical emergency and symptoms should not be ignored.

While these symptoms could be due to a different condition it is important to seek medical advice as soon as possible.

Parents must phone Mars ward as soon as possible if your child has any symptoms of TSS. The specialist burns nurse will then ask a series of questions to triage your child and provide clear advice on what next steps need to be taken.

If your child is difficult to rouse, has mottled appearance (blotchy purple markings on the body), has multiple symptoms or any signs of respiratory distress, then you must dial 999 immediately for review by the ambulance service.

Investigation and Treatment of TSS

If your child has TSS they will need to be admitted to hospital for investigations and supportive measures such as:

* Blood tests
* Wound swabs
* Intravenous antibiotics
* Intravenous fluids