

Fire Hazard

Updated information for
ALL EMOLLIENT products



ALL EMOLLIENTS containing paraffin and paraffin free products, in contact with dressings and clothing are easily ignited with a naked flame or a cigarette.

Keep away from fire when using these products



New information

Emollients: risk of severe and fatal burns with paraffin-containing and paraffin-free emollients

New MHRA guidance has been received about the increased fire risk with emollients.

New evidence suggests that even emollients (skin moisturisers) that contain lower amounts of paraffin and paraffin free emollients can act as an accelerant.

What you and your patients need to know

- All emollients including paraffin free ones can act as an accelerant, increasing the speed of ignition and intensity of the fire. Changing to lower paraffin products or products without paraffin does not eliminate the fire risk.
- Patients and relatives must be informed of the fire risks associated with all emollients. This information should be repeated whenever they come into contact with healthcare services. This should be done verbally and with written information.
- Washing clothing and fabric does not totally remove the emollient build up. Early testing suggests that washing at 60 degrees and above may remove contamination.
- Emollients are an important and effective treatment for chronic dry skin conditions, and are safe to use when the patient is aware of the fire risk.
- Warnings, including an alert symbol, are being added to packaging as a visual reminder.

What you can do to help

- Always consider safety if patients smoke prior to prescribing, dispensing or applying an emollient. Remember, home oxygen and head lice treatments also carry a risk of severe and fatal burns.
- Ensure manufacturer **warning labels** are visible i.e. don't cover with dispensing labels.
- **Display fire safety information** relating to this alert in relevant areas.
- Share this information with patients and colleagues.
- Any healthcare professional that has a concern regarding fire safety with these products can go to the **Fire Service Patient Referral**. LCH has a partnership agreement with West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service (WYFRS) - a link can be found on your internet favourites list.

Further information:

MHRA guidance update:

<https://www.gov.uk/drug-safety-update/emollients-new-information-about-risk-of-severe-and-fatal-burns-with-paraffin-containing-and-paraffin-free-emollients>