



The Mid Yorkshire Hospitals
NHS Trust

Returning to work after a burn injury

There are many ways to approach returning to work after a burn injury. This leaflet will provide you with some useful information and strategies to think about when planning your return to work.

What should you consider?

Are your wounds healed?

Are your wounds healed enough to allow you to carry out your duties? Generally, if a wound no longer needs dressings we would advise that it is healed. At this point you could consider returning to work.

Are you physically fit to return to work?

General deconditioning can occur after a significant burn injury. This may limit your ability to stand for long periods of time, walk long distances or carry objects. The specific nature of your job will influence what you are able to do initially.

Are you psychologically ready to return to work?

When an injury has happened at work (or is connected with work) it can be difficult to return to the place where it happened, or to be around people who were with you at the time. If you are worried about the emotional effect of returning to work you can ask to discuss this with our Clinical Psychologist. The Clinical Psychologist will try to help you understand your concerns and may suggest strategies for coping with your return to work.

Where do you find support?

Burn Team:

We can advise about the timing of your return to work, based on our own knowledge about your role, but a discussion with your employer is essential to facilitate a safe return to work.

Occasionally a burn injury may prevent someone returning to work, but staff should be able to direct you to the right support for this situation

Your employer:

It is important to inform your employer of your injury and potential time off work. This can guide the employer with timescales with which to work to. Your employer may require a sick note. This can be obtained from your hospital doctor or GP. Once you have been off work for a number of weeks your employer may refer you to their Occupational Health department for assessment and/ or support with your return to work. Sometimes external agencies such as case managers/ occupational and vocational rehabilitation services will provide input to support an individual back to work. For the above services there may be cost implications.

What options should you consider if you are returning to work?

There are many advantages to returning to work with your previous employer. These are a few suggestions that could be made when you plan your return to work. These will only be required if you think you will not be able to go back straight into your usual role. Your employer needs to ensure that you are fit to return to the role.

- Returning gradually
- Returning on reduced hours
- Taking more breaks
- Returning with less workload
- Consider any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made for you to undertake your job
- Taking up a different role at the organisation

Will you have to return to the hospital for further appointments?

There is a possibility that you will require further visits at the hospital. This is important to remember when you are discussing returning to work with your employer. The amount of visits will depend on the number of staff you will see and how often they require you to return for appointments. This should be discussed with the different burn team members.

Is returning to work part of my recovery?

Returning to work after a burn injury is a key part of your recovery. Individual circumstances vary and the severity of your burn injury may affect your ability to return to work. Even if you are unable to return to your previous role help and support should be available. The Burn Team are here to advise you with this as a part of your recovery.

Useful Information, Resources and Further Help

The Job Centre

The job centre and job centre plus have useful resources about returning to work or finding a new job. They have Disability Employment Advisors (DEA) who help people to return to work, provide interview coaching and build confidence.

www.jobcentreguide.co.uk

Fit for Work

Fit For Work offers free guidance on health related work issues.

Telephone: 0800 032 6235

<http://fitforwork.org>

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS)

ACAS provides information and advice on workplace rights, rules and best practice.

Helpline: 0300 123 1190

<http://www.acas.org.uk>

If you are a member of a work based union they can be a useful contact if you are encountering problems with returning back to work.

We are committed to providing high quality care. If you have a suggestion, comment, complaint or appreciation about the care you have received, or if you need this leaflet in another format please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on: **01924 542972** or email: **myh-tr.palsmidyorks@nhs.net**

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