



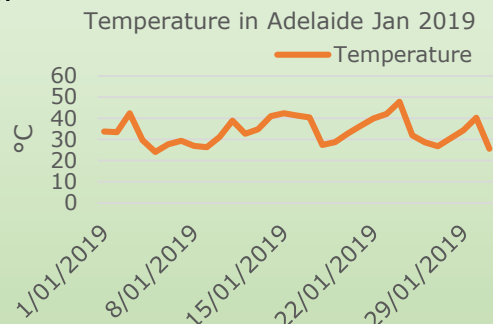
Carnage in Adelaide: Contact burn presentations during the hottest week in history

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In late January 2019, the Royal Adelaide Hospital Burns unit received a spike in inpatient admissions with contact burns.

This is on a background of South Australia reaching its hottest day on record on January 24th 2019 with temperature of 47.7°C.

This was also preceded by a number of hot days above 35 °C, making this January also the hottest on record.

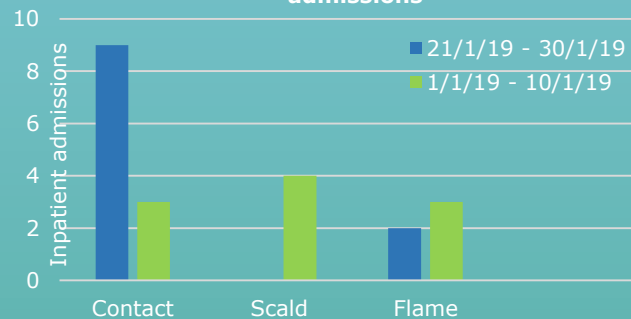


Admission presentations in the 10 days surrounding the “hottest day” (dates from 21/1/19 to 30/1/19) was compared with an average January temperature week (dates from 1/1/19 to 10/1/19).

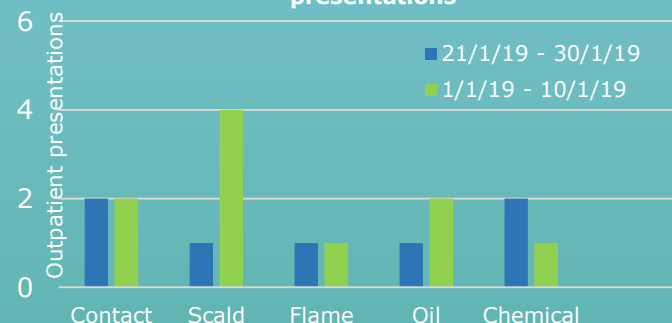
As evident from the table showing the inpatient admissions, there were triple the number of contact burns presentations during this period, with the majority of the contact burns in diabetic or neuropathic patients.

However, surprisingly, the number of contact burn presentations to outpatient clinic were not significant.

Comparison in types of burns of inpatient admissions



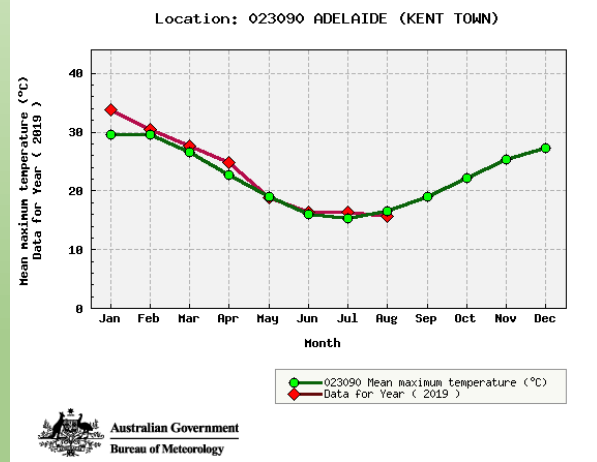
Comparison in types of burns of outpatient presentations



Following this surge of burn injuries, there had been a couple of public health announcement and educational notices via social media regarding awareness and prevention of contact burns from SA Health’s campaign called “Healthy in the Heat”.

In the future, it is hoped that increased public awareness can be made particularly on impact and prevention of contact burns in these vulnerable patient groups in the lead up to hot weather.

With ever increasing global temperatures, easily accessible public education and prevention on this subject is relevant and necessary.



Reference:
1. Australian Government bureau of meteorology. Adelaide (Kent Town), South Australia January 2019 daily weather observations. Available from <<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/dwo/201901/html/IDCJDW5002.201901.shtml>> [16 September 2019]
2. SA Health. Staying healthy in the heat. Available from www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyintheheat [16 September 2019]

