



Electrosurgery – top tips

Everyone in the team must understand the risks of electrosurgery and how to avoid injuries.

- Check the electrosurgery machine and its accessories before using them.
- To get the best plate contact for the return electrode put it on clean, dry, hair-free skin.
- Avoid using alcohol-based skin preparation solutions.
- Check the location of the return electrode in relation to the patient's position, the operating site, scars, metal implants or metal foreign bodies.
- Remember that in laparoscopic surgery capacitive coupling can cause injury.
- Store the active electrode in an insulated quiver while it's not being used.
- Check the skin under the return electrode when you remove the plate.
- Active implants such as pacemakers might need checking by the specialist before or after the operation.
- Think about using a smoke evacuator to reduce the effects of the plume.
- Remember the dangers of accidentally activating the electrosurgical device or using it when other members of staff are touching the patient.

Report adverse incidents and near misses involving medical devices to MHRA via Yellow Card (<https://yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk>) and your trust's Medical Device Safety Officer.