



First Aid

Burns

Burns can include: thermal burns, which are caused by contact with flames, hot liquids, hot surfaces, and other sources of high heat; chemical burns; and electrical burns. For burns, immediate care can be life-saving.

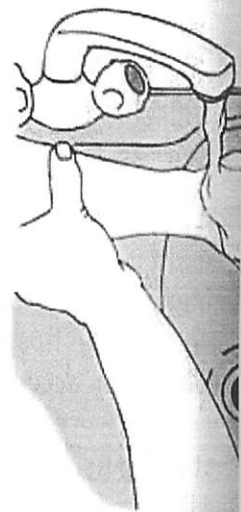
Types of Burns

First-Degree Burns involve the top layer of skin. Sunburn is a first-degree burn.

- *Signs*
 - Red
 - Painful to touch
 - Skin to show mild swelling
- *Treatment*
 - Apply cool, wet compresses, or immerse in cool, fresh water. Continue until pain subsides.
 - Cover the burn with a sterile, non-adhesive bandage or clean cloth.
 - Do not apply ointments or butter to burn; these may cause infection.
 - Over-the-counter pain medications may be used to help relieve pain and reduce inflammation.
 - First-degree burns usually heal without further treatment. However, if a first-degree burn covers a large area of the body, or the victim is an infant or elderly, seek emergency medical attention.

Second-Degree Burns involve the first two layers of skin.

- *Signs*
 - Deep reddening of the skin
 - Pain
 - Blisters
 - Glossy appearance from leaking fluid
 - Possible loss of some skin
- *Treatment*
 - Immerse in fresh, cool water, or apply cool compresses. Continue for 10 to 15 minutes.
 - Dry with clean cloth and cover with sterile gauze.
 - Do not break blisters.
 - Do not apply ointments or butter to burns; these may cause infection.
 - Elevate burned arms or legs.
 - Take steps to prevent shock: lay the victim flat; elevate the feet about 12 inches; and cover the victim with a coat or blanket. Do not place the victim in the shock position if a head, neck, back, or leg injury is suspected, or if it makes the victim uncomfortable.
 - Further medical treatment is required.





Do not attempt to treat serious burns unless you are a trained health professional.

Third-Degree Burns penetrate the entire thickness of the skin and permanently destroy tissue.

Signs

- = Loss of skin layers
- = Often painless (Pain may be caused by patches of first- and second-degree burns which often surround third-degree burns.)
- = Skin dry and leathery
- = Skin possibly charred or with patches that appear white, brown, or black.

Treatment

- = Cover burn lightly with sterile gauze or clean cloth. (Do not use material that can leave lint on the burn.)
- = Do not apply ointments or butter to burns; these may cause infection.
- = Take steps to prevent shock: lay the victim flat; elevate the feet about 12 inches.
- = Have person sit up if face is burned. Watch closely for possible breathing problems.
- = Elevate burned area higher than the victim's head when possible. Keep person warm and comfortable, and watch for signs of shock.
- = Do not place a pillow under the

victim's head if the person is lying down and there is an airway burn. This can close the airway.

- Immediate medical attention is required. Do not attempt to treat serious burns unless you are a trained health professional.

Reference

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010). Mass Casualties: Burns. Retrieved from <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/masscasualties/burns.asp>

Image from <http://www.safekids.co.uk/firstaidburnsscalds.html>