

BURN

SYMPTOMS / RECOGNITION:

There are 3 degrees of burns:

- **Superficial Burn** - First-degree skin will be dry, red, may swell and will usually be painful. An ordinary sunburn is a common example.
- **Partial thickness** - Second-degree skin will be red and may swell, usually very painful, has blisters that may open and release a clear fluid. This will make the skin appear wet.
- **Full Thickness** - Third-degree may destroy underlying tissues such as fat, bones, nerves, and muscles. Skin may be brown or black and will look charred. Tissue underneath may appear white. It may not be painful due to nerve endings being destroyed.
- **Severely Full thickness** - "Fourth-degree" may severely destroy underlying tissues. Skin will be black and will look severely charred. Tissue underneath will appear white. It will not be painful due to nerve endings being severely destroyed.

FIRST AID:

STEP 1: For All Burns

1. Stop Burning Immediately

- Put out fire or stop the person's contact with hot liquid, steam, or other material.
- Help the person "stop, drop, and roll" to smother flames.
- Remove smoldering material from the person.
- Remove hot or burned clothing. If clothing sticks to skin, cut or tear around it.

2. Remove Constrictive Clothing Immediately

- Take off jewelry, belts, and tight clothing. Burns can swell quickly.

STEP 2: Then take the following steps:

FIRST DEGREE BURN:

1. Cool Burn

- Hold burned skin under cool (not cold) running water or immerse in cool water until pain subsides.
- Use compresses if running water isn't available.

2. Protect Burn

- Cover with sterile, non-adhesive bandage or clean cloth.
- Do not apply butter or ointments, which can cause infection.

3. Treat Pain

- Give over-the-counter pain reliever such as [ibuprofen](#) ([Advil](#), [Motrin](#)), [acetaminophen](#) ([Tylenol](#)), or [naproxen](#) ([Aleve](#)).

4. When to See a Doctor

- Seek medical help if:
- You see signs of infection, like increased pain, redness, swelling, fever, or oozing.
- The person needs [tetanus](#) or booster shot, depending on date of last injection. Tetanus booster should be given every 10 years.
- The burn [blister](#) is larger than two inches or oozes.
- Redness and pain last more than a few hours.
- Pain worsens.

SECOND DEGREE BURN:

1. Cool Burn

- Immerse in cool water for 10 or 15 minutes.
- Use compresses if running water isn't available.
- Don't apply ice. It can lower [body temperature](#) and cause further pain and damage.
- Don't break [blisters](#) or apply butter or ointments, which can cause infection.

2. Protect Burn

- Cover loosely with sterile, nonstick bandage and secure in place with gauze or tape.

3. Prevent Shock

Unless the person has a head, neck, or leg injury, or it would cause discomfort:

- Lay the person flat.
- Elevate feet about 12 inches.
- Elevate burn area above [heart](#) level, if possible.
- Cover the person with coat or blanket.

4. See a Doctor

- The doctor can test burn severity, prescribe [antibiotics](#) and pain medications, and administer a [tetanus shot](#), if needed.

THIRD DEGREE BURN:

1. Call 911

2. Protect Burn Area

- Cover loosely with sterile, nonstick bandage or, for large areas, a sheet or other material that that won't leave lint in wound.
- Separate burned toes and fingers with dry, sterile dressings.
- Do not soak burn in water or apply ointments or butter, which can cause infection.

3. Prevent Shock

Unless the person has a head, neck, or leg injury or it would cause discomfort:

- Lay the person flat.
- Elevate feet about 12 inches.
- Elevate burn area above [heart](#) level, if possible.
- Cover the person with coat or blanket.
- For an airway burn, do not place pillow under the person's head when the person is lying down. This can close the airway.
- Have a person with a facial burn sit up.
- Check [pulse](#) and breathing to monitor for shock until emergency help arrives.

4. See a Doctor

- Doctors will give oxygen and fluid, if needed, and treat the burn.