

First Aid for Minor Burns (Adults & Children)

Minor (first-degree and small second-degree) burns usually affect only the outer layers of skin. Keep calm, cool the burn, protect the area, and watch for signs of infection. Below are clear, age-aware steps for immediate care, prevention, and when to seek Help.

Common Causes of Minor Burns

- Scalds from hot liquids or steam (very common in children)
- Brief contact with hot objects (irons, stove tops)
- Sunburn from excessive UV exposure
- Chemical splashes from household cleaners
- Small flash burns (e.g., hair straightener, soldering)



Immediate First Aid (Adults & Children)

- Stop the burning — remove the person from the source of heat.
- Cool the burn with cool running water for 10–20 minutes (not cold/ice). This reduces pain and tissue damage.
- Remove jewellery, watches or tight clothing from the area before swelling starts.
- Cover the burn with a clean, non-fluffy sterile dressing or cling film (loosely).
- Give pain relief as appropriate (paracetamol or ibuprofen) following age and dosing guidelines.



What NOT to Do

- Do not apply ice directly — this can cause further tissue damage.
- Do not put butter, oil, toothpaste, or other home remedies on the burn.
- Do not burst blisters — leave them intact to reduce infection risk.
- Avoid tight dressings or adhesives directly on the burnt skin.





When to Seek Medical Help

- If the burn is larger than the palm of the injured person (including children).
- If the burn is on the face, hands, feet, groin, major joints, or over a large area.
- If the burn is deep, charred, or exposes tissue beneath the skin.
- If there are signs of infection: increasing redness, swelling, pus, worsening pain, or fever.
- If the victim is very young, elderly, pregnant, or has underlying medical conditions — seek professional advice sooner.



Preventing Minor Burns — Adults & Children

Many burns are preventable with small changes around the home, in the kitchen, and outdoors. Use extra vigilance with children and older adults.



Child-Specific Safety

- Keep hot drinks and sauces well away from table edges and out of children's reach.
- Place hot pots on back burners and turn handles inwards on the stove.
- Test bath water temperature before placing a child in the tub (aim for about 37°C / 98–100°F).
- Use kettle and iron guards and set water heater thermostats to $\leq 49^{\circ}\text{C}$ (120°F) if possible.





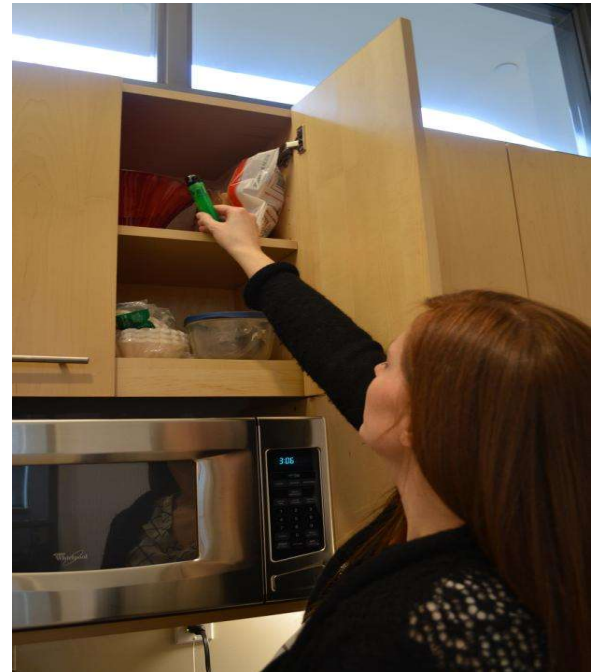
Home & Kitchen Tips (All

Ages)

- Keep pot handles, hot pans, and irons out of reach; use back burners when possible.
- Use oven mitts and heat-resistant trivets; teach safe handling of hot objects.
- Store chemicals safely and wear gloves/eye protection when using caustic cleaners.
- Use sunscreen and protective clothing to prevent sunburns during prolonged outdoor exposure.

Safe Environment

- Keep matches, lighters, and flammable items locked away and out of children's reach.
- Install smoke detectors and keep a fire extinguisher accessible in the kitchen.
- Educate older children on safe behavior around stoves, grills, and campfires.



Treatment & Medication (Minor Burns)

What to use after immediate first aid to support healing and reduce discomfort.

Key Points

Minor burns are best managed by cooling, protecting the wound, then supporting skin repair and pain control. Medicines and topical products help with pain control and preventing infection — but they do not replace proper first aid.

Pain Relief & Other Meds

Topical Care

- After cooling, gently pat dry and apply a thin layer of sterile petroleum jelly (e.g., Vaseline) or an antibiotic ointment (e.g., bacitracin) if recommended by your local guidelines.
- Cover with a non-stick sterile dressing; change dressing daily and after cleaning.
- Avoid creams with fragrances or strong irritants on broken skin.

- Use age-appropriate oral analgesics: paracetamol (acetaminophen) or ibuprofen for pain and inflammation — follow dosing guidelines for children and adults.
- Topical prescription agents (e.g., silver-containing dressings) are reserved for larger or deeper burns and must be used under clinician direction.
- If signs of infection appear (increasing redness, swelling, discharge, fever), seek medical advice promptly — antibiotics may be required.

Follow-up & Dressing

Small burns usually heal within 1–3 weeks. Keep the area clean and protected, avoid sun exposure to the healing skin, and seek follow-up care if healing is delayed or scarring is a concern.