

Thermal Burns Treatment



CALL 102 IF:

- The burn penetrates all layers of the skin.
- The skin is leathery or charred looking, with white, brown, or black patches.
- The hands, feet, face, or genitals are burned.
- The person is an infant or a senior.

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.

Then take the following steps:

For First-Degree Burns (Affecting Top Layer of Skin)

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.

5. Follow Up

- The doctor will examine the burn and may prescribe antibiotics and pain medication.

For Second-Degree Burns (Affecting Top 2 Layers of Skin)

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.

For Third-Degree Burns

1. Call 102

2. Protect Burn Area

- Cover loosely with sterile, nonstick bandage or, for large areas, a sheet or other material 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.