

UNDERSTANDING BURNS

Understand Your Burn Degree

There are three degrees of burns.

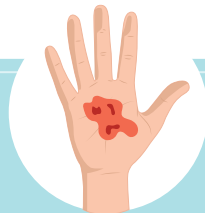
First-Degree Burns

These are superficial burns affecting the outer layer of skin, which typically heal in 7-10 days.



Second-Degree Burns

These burns involve deeper layers of skin, may blister, and take weeks to heal.



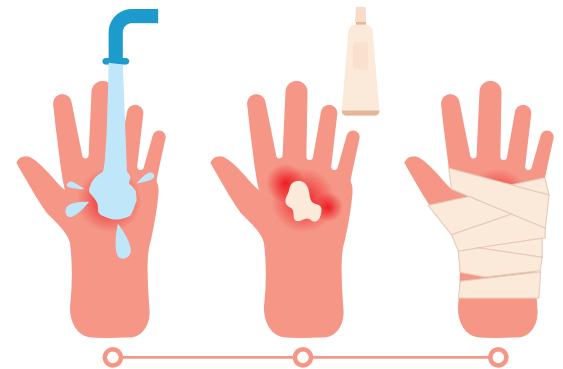
Third-Degree Burns

With third-degree burns, there is damage to all layers of the skin and specialised care, including skin grafts, may be required.



Wound Care Tips

- **Keep the Burn Clean:** Gently wash with mild soap and water, and avoid scrubbing.
- **Avoid Popping Blisters:** Blisters act as a protective barrier. If they rupture, keep the area clean and covered.
- **Moisturise:** Keep the area moist with recommended ointments (e.g., silver sulfadiazine, aloe vera, or petroleum jelly) to promote healing and prevent scarring.



Manage Pain

- Use over-the-counter pain relievers like ibuprofen or acetaminophen if advised.
- Avoid tight clothing or pressure on the burn.
- Elevate the burn area to reduce swelling.
- Apply cool compresses (not ice) to help soothe pain.



Prevent Scarring

- Avoid exposing the burn to direct sunlight. Use sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher) on healed areas.
- Massage the burn gently with unscented moisturiser once healed to improve skin elasticity.

Follow-Up Appointments

Attend all scheduled follow-ups to monitor healing. Be sure to contact a doctor if healing is delayed or if complications arise.

When to Seek Immediate Medical Attention

Infection is one of the most common problems that can occur following burns. These are some common signs of infection.

- Increased pain or changes in sensation (e.g., numbness)
- A wound that starts to smell or exude a green/yellow discharge
- Redness or swelling that spreads rapidly beyond the burn site or warmth around the burn
- Fever, chills, or flu-like symptoms



FAQs

Some Common Questions about Burns

Q: How can I prevent infection in a burn?

- A:**
- Wash your hands before touching the burn.
 - Keep the wound clean and covered with sterile, non-stick dressings.
 - Follow prescribed dressing change instructions.
 - Watch for signs of infection like redness, swelling, pus, or fever.

Q: Can I pop blisters on a burn?

A: No. Blisters protect the underlying skin and reduce the risk of infection. If a blister pops on its own, clean the area and cover it with a sterile dressing.

Q: When can I stop covering the burn?

A: Stop covering the burn once it is fully healed and no longer weeping or at risk of infection. For larger burns, follow your healthcare provider's advice.