

Preventing and Treating BURNS

Cooking and serving food creates all kinds of situations where people can get burned. Hot food and beverages, chemicals, appliances and various other things can cause burns.

Prevent Burns By:

- ◆ wearing personal protective equipment, such as an oven mitt.
- ◆ being constantly aware of hazards that can cause burns, such as hot plates and boiling water.
- ◆ following safety procedures, such as...
 - Set containers back from the table edge.
 - Turn pot handles in.
 - Never leave young children alone in a bathroom or kitchen.
 - Check for obstacles in your path before carrying hot liquids.
 - Roll up electric cords; set appliances back from counter edge.
 - Don't leave hot drinks unattended.

First-Degree Burns

Appearance

Redness, pain and sometimes mild swelling

Treatment

- ◆ Remove rings, watches and clothing from the burned area.
- ◆ Treat with cold water or a cold compress (not ice, which can cause frostbite) for a few minutes or until the pain subsides.
- ◆ Gently clean the area with soap and water and pat dry.
- ◆ Apply aloe vera gel to keep the skin moist.



Second-Degree Burns

Appearance

Severe pain and swollen skin with blistering



Treatment

- ◆ Run cold water over the burn.
- ◆ If available, apply the over-the-counter medication bacitracin in a thin layer.
- ◆ Cover the burn with a sterile nonstick gauze pad.
- ◆ Avoid breaking a blister or applying margarine, butter, grease, oil, petroleum jelly or ointment to the burn. They can seal in heat and increase the risk of infection.

Treating Burns

Third-degree burns require immediate medical attention. First- and second-degree burns usually require professional care if they cover more than one-fifth of the skin's surface or involve the face or genitals. You should also call your doctor if your burn does not begin to heal within two days or if you develop a fever. To properly treat a burn, you need to know how serious it is and what caused it. Here are types of burns and ways to treat them:

Third-Degree Burns

Appearance

Skin looks leathery, waxy, pearly-gray or charred, although there's relatively little pain at first

Treatment

- ◆ Call for emergency help.
- ◆ Cover the burned area with a clean cloth and loosely bind it with a larger cloth, but avoid paper towels, tissue, cotton and adhesive bandages.
- ◆ Avoid removing clothing or anything else sticking to a wound unless it is saturated with corrosive chemicals.
- ◆ Avoid touching the burned area or putting any fluid, oil or ointment on it.
- ◆ Cover the victim with a blanket. Make sure the person is breathing, and don't give the victim food. Small, frequent sips of water may be helpful if the victim is conscious.

Chemical Burns

Flush the area with running water for at least 15 minutes, 30 minutes if the chemical is in the eyes.



- ◆ Remove any clothing around the burn while keeping the burn under running water, if possible.
- ◆ If first aid instructions are on the chemical container, follow them and cover the burn with a clean cloth.

Electrical Burns

Burns from electricity require immediate emergency care, since deep tissue injury may not be apparent immediately.