



Quick First Aid guide

ProSafety NZ

Topic: Burns

The depth of a burn determines its severity. **First degree burns** damage the outer layer of skin (epidermis) and cause pain, redness and swelling (erythema). **Second degree burns** damage the epidermis and the inner layer, the dermis, causing erythema and blistering. Damage from third degree burns extend into the hypodermis, causing destruction of the full thickness of skin with its nerve supply (numbness). **Third degree burns** leave scars and may cause loss of function and/or sensation.

- Cool the affected part of the body with cold water until pain is relieved. Thorough cooling may take 10 minutes or more, but this must not delay taking the casualty to hospital.
- Certain chemicals may seriously irritate or damage the skin.
- Avoid contaminating yourself with the chemical. Treat in the same way as for other burns but flood the affected area with water for 20 minutes. Continue treatment even on the way to hospital, if necessary.
- Remove any contaminated clothing which is not stuck to the skin.

DO NOT

- DO NOT apply ointment, butter, ice, medications, cream, oil spray, or any household remedy to a severe burn.
- DO NOT breathe, blow, or cough on the burn.
- DO NOT disturb blistered or dead skin.
- DO NOT remove clothing that is stuck to the skin.
- DO NOT give the person anything by mouth, if there is a severe burn.
- DO NOT immerse a severe burn in cold water. This can cause shock.

DO NOT place a pillow under the person's head if there is an airway burn. This can close the airway.

Disclaimer. ProSafety NZ has taken care in preparing the guide. However, care should be taken in diagnosing and applying first aid treatment. Where possible professional help should be called.
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