

## PATIENT AND FAMILY INFORMATION SHEET

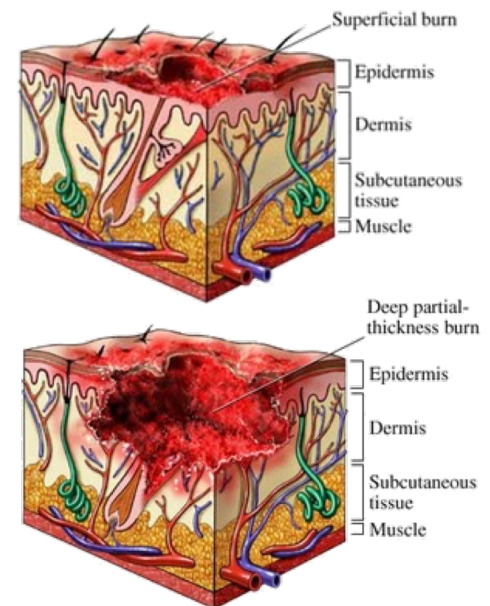
### Burns

#### What is a Burn?

A burn is harm to the body's tissues caused by a heat source (fire, steam or liquid), chemicals, electricity, or radiation. The younger the child, the thinner the deeper layer of skin is (dermis), causing deeper injury. Common causes of burns are scalds from hot liquids, building fires, and flammable liquids or gases.

#### What are the different types of burns?

- **SUPERFICIAL/FIRST DEGREE:** Painful, reddening of the top layer of the skin (epidermis), blanches with pressure
- **SUPERFICIAL PARTIAL THICKNESS or DEEP PARTIAL THICKNESS/ SECOND DEGREE:** Blistered, wet skin that affect the layers below the top layer, painful
- **FULL THICKNESS/THIRD DEGREE:** Discolored, dry part (black, white, charred), harm to all layers of skin and tissues below, no pain due to nerves being destroyed
- **INHALATION:** injury to the lungs and airways from smoke



#### What do you do if you child gets burned?

*Go to a doctor or Emergency Room right away if:*

- Your child has a second- or third-degree burn
- The burned area is large (2-3 inches in diameter), even if it seems like a minor burn.
- For **any** burn that appears to cover a large part of the body, call for medical help.
- **Do not** use a wet towel or ice because they can cause the child's temperature to drop. Instead, cover the area with a clean, soft cloth or towel.
- The burn comes from a fire, an electrical wire or socket, or chemicals.
- The burn is on the face, head, hands, joint surfaces, or genitals.
- The burn looks infected (with swelling, pus, increasing redness, or red streaking of the skin near the wound).

*For a first-degree burn:*

- Remove the child from the heat source.
- Remove any clothing or jewelry from the burn area and cover with a clean, soft dry cloth or towel.
- Stop the burning process by running cool water gently over the burnt area.
- **Do not** put butter, grease, powder, or any other cures to the burn, as these can make the burn deeper and increase the risk of infection.

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#### How are burns treated?

*Goals of burn treatment are to prevent infection, control pain, and encourage healing.*

- For **superficial/first degree burns**, unscented lotion (alcohol-free) or antibiotic ointment can be used.
- For **partial thickness/second degree burns**, cleaning and removing blisters may be done by a medical team.
- Do not pop blisters or pull off skin of partial thickness burns.
- Wound dressings may be put on and need frequent changing. The type of dressing used depends on the type of burn.
- Deep partial thickness/second degree burns may need skin grafting. Skin grafting is a surgery that involves removing skin from one part of the body and moving it, to a different part of the body.
- Full thickness/third degree burns almost always need skin grafting. The donor skin is taken from the patient.



Once the burn is healed and no longer needs a dressing, the care will focus on scar prevention and allowing the patient to fully heal back to normal.

#### Massage

Once the skin is healed, you may be taught to put on a non-perfumed lotion or moisturizer at least 4 times a day. Lotion massage helps the skin stay moist to limit scarring and helps with itching.

#### Casting

A cast may be ordered by your provider. A cast will protect the burnt area during the healing process, lessen the need for frequent dressing changes and allow healing in the best position. Cast care will be taught to you after it is put on.

#### Pressure Garments

Tight elastic garments may be used to help limit scarring. Custom pressure garments put constant, even pressure on the scar tissue, which results in improvement of scars. If a pressure garment is ordered, it will be custom ordered by a physical or occupational therapist.

#### Promote Healing

It is important for your child to have a healthy diet as they heal. Your child needs increased protein in his/her diet to help burn wounds heal and prevent infection. If the patient is not able to eat and drink enough, call your provider right away.

#### Emotional Support

Patients with burns may express feelings of anger, frustration, irritability, anxiety, and sadness. Parents also report feelings of guilt and sadness. A social worker, psychologist, or child-life specialist can offer further support for the patient and family.

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#### How do I care for my child at home?

- **Dressings** - Normally, your child's dressings will need to be changed every 4-7 days, unless told otherwise by your provider.
  - Keep dressings dry. Sponge bathe only between dressing changes.
  - Dirty dressings from playing are okay if the dressings stay dry and in place.
  - Dressings should be changed if they become wet or soiled from urine, stool or vomit.
  - You may need to reinforce dressings to keep them in one piece.
- **Playing Outdoors** - We want your child to be as active as he or she can be, and some simple precautions can help with burn healing.
  - Protect face burns from direct sun by wearing a large protective hat.
  - Prevent sand and dirt from getting underneath dressings.
  - No contact sports until burn injuries are healed.



#### When should I call the office?

*If your child experiences any of the following, please call our office:*

- Fever more than 100.5 F or 38.0 C
- Pain that does not go away with over the counter pain medicine
- More redness around the burnt skin, or swollen skin
- Odor from the wound
- Dressing that comes off that is supposed to remain in place
- Any questions that you may have

#### How to prevent burns?

- Make sure there are working smoke alarms on each level of your home
- Keep a fire extinguisher on each level of your home
- Always test bathwater before your child goes in the tub
- Do not leave a child without supervision in the bathtub or near water faucets
- Set your hot water heater to no higher than 120°Fahrenheit (49°Celsius)
- Turn handles of pots and pans away from the stove's edge or use the back burners
- Keep a "kid-free zone" of at least 3 feet around the stove
- Have an adult watch any children in the kitchen



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### *Burns*

#### **How to prevent burns?**

- Keep a safe distance from bonfires
- Don't drink hot liquids while holding a child
- Keep matches, firecrackers, gasoline, and other explosives out of reach of children
- Keep electrical appliances away from water
- Unplug devices when not in use, and place these things high, out of reach from young children while they are cooling
- Never smoke in bed
- Before placing a child in a car seat, check for hot straps or buckles
- Supervise children around gas, electric fire places, and pellet stoves



*Your child will need to follow up with the surgeon. You will receive specific instructions for follow up when your child is discharged.*

**Please call our office if you have any problems or concerns.**

Surgeon: \_\_\_\_\_

Nurse Practitioners: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (daytime): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (after hours): \_\_\_\_\_

Social Worker: \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for allowing us to care for your child.*