



BETTERSAFE

WELCOA'S ONLINE BULLETIN FOR YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY

Burn Awareness Week

A HOT TOPIC TO TALK ABOUT

Things are heating up and it's not just because Valentine's Day is around the corner. National Burn Awareness Week is February 7-13 and now is a great time to learn about common types of burns and how to prevent them.

HOW BURNS ARE CLASSIFIED & COMMON CAUSES

When watching medical dramas, oftentimes you will hear the doctors talk about the degrees of a burn, but not always what caused it. It's important to discuss both when you are talking about burn awareness.

Burns are classified in four degree categories:

- » **1st Degree:** Damage to the outer layer of skin. The site is red, painful, dry, and with no blisters.
- » **2nd Degree:** Damage to the outer layer and part of the lower layer of skin. The site is red, blistered, may be swollen, and painful.
- » **3rd Degree:** Damage to the outer layer, lower layer, and may go into the inner most layer of skin. The site may look white, black, leathery, or charred with widespread thickness.
- » **4th Degree:** Requires immediate medical care. Damage to both layers of the skin and underlying tissue as well as deeper tissue, possibly involving muscle and bone. There is likely no feeling in the area due to damage to nerve endings.



Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.

COMMON TYPES OF BURNS

- » **Friction Burns:** When a hard object rubs off some of your skin. This is both a scrape and a heat burn.
- » **Cold Burns:** Damage caused to skin by freezing it or coming in direct contact with something very cold for a long period of time. Also called frostbite.
- » **Thermal Burns:** Touching a very hot object raises the temperature of your skin to the point the cells start to die.
- » **Radiation Burns:** A sunburn is actually a type of radiation burn. X-rays or radiation therapy can also cause these.
- » **Chemical Burns:** Damage caused when strong acids, solvents, or detergents touch your skin.
- » **Electrical Burns:** If you come into contact with an electrical current, it is classified as an electrical burn.

BURN PREVENTION TIPS: OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

- » Hot surfaces are not just in your kitchen, they are outdoors too. As the old saying goes, “it’s hot enough to fry an egg on the sidewalk” it’s too hot for your toes too! Make sure to protect your feet and your pet’s paws on hot sidewalks and asphalt.
- » Stand at least 3 feet away from hot outdoor objects such as grills and fire pits. Keep the area clear of trip hazards and limit alcohol consumption around these objects.
- » As the temperatures start to drop in your area, dress in several layers of loose warm clothing and cover any exposed skin with hats, boots, gloves, face coverings, etc. to avoid frostbite. Do not ignore shivering. That is the first sign the body is losing heat. Go indoors.



BURN PREVENTION TIPS: INSIDE THE HOME

- » Unplug electronic devices when they are not in use.
- » Have a kid-free zone at least 3 feet around the stove and areas where hot food or beverages are prepared or carried.
- » Gas fireplace glass doors can reach excessive temperatures (1,300°F / 704°C). Serious burn injuries from the hot glass can happen in less than one second. Use safety gates and install screen barriers to keep your home safe.

REFERENCES

<http://ameriburn.org/prevention/burn-awareness-week/>
<https://www.webmd.com/first-aid/types-degrees-burns#1>