

# Idaho Falls Pediatrics

## Burns

### What is a burn?

There are three types of burns:

- A first degree burn is reddened skin without blisters. It does not leave a scar.
- A second degree burn has blisters. It does not leave a scar. Second-degree burns take up to 3 weeks to heal.
- A third-degree burn is deep and leaves areas of charred skin. During healing it usually needs a skin graft to prevent bad scarring. A skin graft is a patch of healthy skin from another part of the body used to help repair the damaged area.

Usually burns are first or second degree.

### What should I do when my child gets a burn?

Immediately put the burned part in cold tap water or pour cold tap water over it for 10 minutes. This will lessen the depth of the burn and relieve pain. If the burned area is large, cover it loosely with a clean sheet or plastic wrap.

### How can I take care of my child?

- **Burn care.** Wash the area gently with warm water once a day. Don't use soap unless the burn is dirty. Don't open any blisters-- the outer skin protects the burn from infection. If the burn is second degree, the blister is broken, and the skin is gone, put an antibiotic ointment on it. Cover it with a Band-Aid or gauze. Change the bandage every other day. Use warm water and 1 or 2 gentle wipes with a wet washcloth to remove any dirt and put on more antibiotic ointment. Do not put any butter or burn ointments on the burn. Once the blisters break open, the dead skin needs to be wiped off with a wet washcloth or trimmed off with fine scissors.

- **Pain relief.** Put cold wet cloths on the burned area. Give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol) every 4 hours or ibuprofen (Advil) every 6 hours for at least 24 hours.

**Call your child's doctor right away if:**

- A blister is larger than 2 inches across.
- The burn is on the face, hands, feet, or genitals.
- It was an electrical burn.

**Call your doctor during office hours if:**

- It starts to look infected.
- It isn't healed within 10 days.
- You have other questions or concerns.

\*NOTE: This information is provided as a public educational service. The information does not replace any of the instructions your physician gives you. If you have a medical emergency please call the Hospital at (208) 529-6111. If you have questions about your child's care, please call Idaho Falls Pediatrics at (208) 522-4600.