

Burns

A burn is any injury of tissue caused by heat, flame, chemicals, or electricity. Burn classification determines the severity of the wound based on the depth of the tissue injury.

First-degree burns are limited to redness and minor pain at the site of injury. These burns only involve the top layer of skin and heal quickly.

Second-degree burns have superficial blistering of the skin, and can involve deeper layers of the skin.

Third-degree burns occur when the top layer of skin is lost with damage to the deeper layers. Burns exhibit charring and extreme damage. Third-degree burns result in scarring and may require skin grafting.

What to Do

- Extinguish all flames.
- Use appropriate measures to avoid being bitten (muzzle your pet).
- Avoid touching any pet that has been electrocuted until the power has been turned off.
- For thermal or electrical burns, immediately apply cool water compresses with a clean cloth to the site of the injury, changing them frequently as necessary to keep the site cool and wet. Continue this for at least 30 minutes.
- For chemical burns, see [chemical injuries](#).
- Transport your pet to a veterinary facility as soon as possible for further care. Burns can become worse before they get better, and may require several weeks of therapy, multiple surgeries and possibly skin grafting.

What NOT to Do

- Do not apply ointments or butter.
- Do not delay seeking veterinary attention.
- Do not attempt to remove burned hair or skin yourself.