Burns to the skin can be caused by dry heat or steam, fire, hot liquids or foods, electricity, or chemicals.

First degree burns damage the outer skin layer. These burns are red, swollen and very tender, like sunburn.

Second degree burns are deeper and cause blisters. They will take longer to heal.

Third degree burns injure all the skin layers and sometimes need skin grafting to heal. The burn may look white, cherry red or even black. These burns are not minor burns and must be seen immediately.

If Someone is Burned:

- Run cool, clean water on the burned area for several minutes. Do NOT apply ice. Do NOT apply any ointments until instructed.
- Call your child’s doctor or the Children’s Mercy Hospital Information Line at (816) 234-3188 for more instructions.

Home Care:

- As instructed, keep the burn area clean, dry, and protected with a dressing.
- Change the dressing ______ time(s) a day, or more often if it gets soiled.
- Before bathing your child, clean the tub with a liquid disinfectant and rinse well.
  1. Use clean towels and wash cloths, and have dressing supplies ready.
  2. Soak the burn for 5 to 10 minutes in warm, NOT HOT, bath water.
  3. Use mild (baby or Ivory®) soap.
  4. Gently wash the burn as you have been shown and pat dry.
- Bandage the burn area as instructed.

Activity:

- Ask your child’s doctor about limits to outdoor play and school until the burn heals.
- If the burn covers a joint area, such as the elbow or ankle, you will need to stretch it to prevent stiffness. Do this each time you change the dressings.
- Make sure your child eats a healthy diet. Encourage fluids and foods that are important for the skin to heal itself. (Cheese, milk, meats, fruits, and vegetables.)
- Bandage the burn area as instructed.
Pain:

The doctor has ordered ______________________ every 4 to 6 hours as needed for pain. You may also give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen for pain for the first 3 to 4 days. Check the package for the right dose, based on his age and weight. Do not give your child more than 5 doses of acetaminophen or 4 doses of ibuprofen in 24 hours. Call your child’s doctor if the pain gets worse or does not get better.

Call your child’s doctor or the Children’s Mercy Hospital Burn Unit at (816) 234-3520 if:

- Your child has a fever of more than 101° F (38.3° C).
- The burn area gets red around the edges.
- The burn smells bad.
- You have any questions or concerns.

A follow-up appointment has been made for your child. It is very important to keep the appointment so you can receive further instructions on ____/____/____ (date) at __________ (time) in the ________________________________ (location).