

# Not All Burns Are the Same

## Comparison Guide to Different Burn Types

Burn Type	Cause	Common Characteristics
<b>Contact Burns</b>	Direct contact with hot objects or surfaces (metal, asphalt, pavement, etc.)	Localized, well-defined area, redness, blistering, or charring depending on severity
<b>Scald Burns</b>	Hot liquids or steam	Diffuse, irregular edges, red, moist skin; may blister quickly, usually superficial to partial-thickness
<b>Flame Burns</b>	Open flames (fire, explosions, etc.)	Charred or blackened skin, blistering and varying depths of injury
<b>Chemical Burns</b>	Acids, alkalis, cleaning products	Redness, irritation, or white/gray discoloration. may be dry or wet depending on the chemical, blistering or tissue damage can progress over time
<b>Electrical Burns</b>	Electrical current passing through the body	Often small entry/exit wounds (can look minor on the surface), charring or deep tissue injury beneath skin
<b>Radiation Burns</b>	Sunburn or radiation exposure	Redness, peeling, dry or moist desquamation (skin sloughing), delayed onset (hours to days after exposure)

*Source: The Diane & Bruce Halle Arizona Burn Center - Valleywise Health Team*

**Even small burns can be deeper than they appear.**

Delaying care can lead to serious complications and damage. When in doubt or if you think a life is in danger, please call 911.