

Sunburn

Sunburn is an often painful sign of skin damage from spending too much time outdoors without wearing protective sunscreen. Years of overexposure to the sun lead to premature wrinkling, aging of the skin, age spots, and an increased risk of skin cancer.

In addition to the skin, eyes can get burned from sun exposure. Sunburned eyes become red, dry, and painful, and feel gritty. Chronic exposure of eyes to sunlight may cause pterygium (tissue growth that leads to blindness), cataracts, and perhaps macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness.

Symptoms

Unlike other burns, sunburn is not immediately apparent. Symptoms usually start about 4 hours after sun exposure, worsen in 24-36 hours, and resolve in 3-5 days.

Symptoms may include:

- Red, warm, tender and swollen skin
- Blistering
- Headache
- Fever
- Nausea
- Fatigue

The pain from sunburn is worse 6-48 hours after sun exposure.

Skin peeling usually begins 3-8 days after exposure.

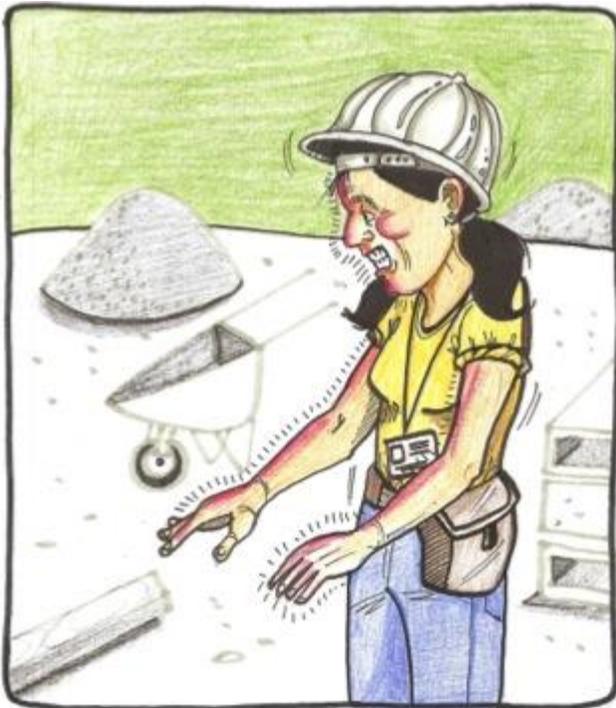
First Aid

There is no quick cure for minor sunburn:

- Take aspirin, acetaminophen, or ibuprofen to relieve pain and headache and reduce fever.
- Drink plenty of water helps to replace fluid losses.
- Cool baths or the gentle application of cool wet cloths on the burned area may also provide some comfort.
- Avoid further exposure until the skin is better.
- Apply moisturizing cream, aloe, or 1% hydrocortisone cream for additional relief.

If blistering occurs:

- Lightly bandage or cover the area with gauze to prevent infection.
- Don't break or pop the blisters to avoid infection.
- When the blisters break and the skin peels, remove dried fragments and apply an antiseptic ointment or hydrocortisone cream.
- Seek medical attention if any of the following occur:
 - Severe sunburns covering more than 15% of the body
 - Dehydration
 - High fever (>101°F)
 - Extreme pain that persists for longer than 48 hours



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