



Treating a sunburn

Sunburn is a sign of skin damage from spending too much time outdoors without wearing sunscreen.

Years of overexposure to the sun leads to premature wrinkling, age spots, and an increased risk of skin cancer.



Eyes can also 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

Macular degeneration, a leading cause of blindness

Sunburns usually appear about 4 hours after sun exposure, worsen in 24-36 hours, and resolve in 3-5 days.

A worker with a sunburn may experience:

Red, warm, and tender skin

Swollen skin

Blistering

Headache

Fever

Nausea

Fatigue



There is no quick cure for minor sunburn.

Workers with sunburns should avoid further exposure to the sun until the burn has resolved.

If you have a sunburn, you can:

Take a pain reliever to help with pain, headaches, and fever.

Drink plenty of water to replace fluid losses.

Take cool baths or apply cool wet cloths on the burned area.

Apply a topical moisturizing cream, aloe, or 1% hydrocortisone cream.



If blistering occurs, lightly bandage or cover the area with gauze to prevent infection. Broken blisters slow the healing process and increase the risk of infection. When the blisters break and the skin peels, dried fragments may be removed.

Apply an antiseptic ointment or hydrocortisone cream.

Seek medical attention if:

Severe sunburns cover more than 15% of your body.

You are dehydrated.

You have a high fever (over 101°F).

Extreme pain lasts longer than 48 hours.