Skin Injuries: What Kind of Care Do I Need?  
BURNS and SUNBURNS

For 1st Degree Burns:
Immerse the affected area in cold (not ice) water until the pain subsides. If the affected area is dirty, gently wash it with soapy water first. Keep the area uncovered and elevated, if possible. Apply a dry dressing, if necessary, to protect the area from dirt, etc. Do not use butter or ointments, such as Vaseline. You can, however, apply aloe vera 3 to 4 times a day. Don’t use local anesthetic sprays and creams.

For 2nd Degree Burns:
- Immerse the affected area in cold (not ice) water until the pain subsides. Dip clean cloths in cold water, wring them out, and apply them to the burned area for as long as an hour. Blot the area dry. Do not rub. Don’t use antiseptic sprays or creams. Do not break any blisters. If the blisters break on their own, apply an antibacterial spray or ointment and keep the area wrapped with a sterile dressing. Once dried, dress the area with a single layer of loose gauze that does not stick to the skin. Keep it in place with bandage tape that is placed well away from the burned area. Change the dressing the next day and every 2 days after that. Prop the burned area higher than the rest of the body, if possible. See a health care provider if the burn does not improve after 2 days, more than the outer skin layer has been affected, or more than 3 inches in diameter of the skin has burned.

For 3rd Degree Burns:
If charring of the skin occurs (the skin looks black and white), and pain is not severe, seek health care immediately.