

# Burn Depth Characteristics

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	Superficial Epidermal eg sunburn  '1 <sup>st</sup> degree'	Superficial Dermal Thickness (partial) '2 <sup>nd</sup> degree'	Mid Dermal Thickness (partial) '2 <sup>nd</sup> degree'	Deep Dermal Thickness (partial) '2 <sup>nd</sup> degree'	Full Thickness  '3 <sup>rd</sup> degree'
PATHOLOGY	Involves epidermis only	Involves epidermis and upper dermis, most adnexal structures intact	↔	Involves epidermis and significant part of dermis, only deeper adnexal structures intact	Epidermis, dermis and cell adnexal structures destroyed
APPEARANCE	Dry and red, blanches to pressure. No blisters.	Pale pink. Smaller blisters. Wound base blanches with pressure.	↔	Blotchy red or pale deeper dermis where blisters have ruptured	White waxy charred. No blisters. No capillary refill
SENSATION	Maybe painful	Increased sensation  Very painful and tender	↔	Decreased sensation	No sensation
CIRCULATION	Normal, increased	Hyperaemic  Rapid capillary refill.	↔	Sluggish capillary refill	Nil
COLOUR	Red, warm	Pink	↔	White/Pale pink/ Blotchy red	White/Charred/ Black
BLISTERS	None or (days) later or desquamation	Yes (within hours of injury)	↔	Early—usually large blisters which rupture rapidly and slough	Epidermis & dermis destroyed, no blistering
HEALING TIME	Within seven days	7-14 days	↔	Over 21 days	Does not heal spontaneously
SCARRING	No scar	Colour match defect. Low risk of hypertrophic scarring	↔	High risk (up to 80%) hypertrophic scarring	Wound contraction  Heals by secondary intention

↔ In the range between Superficial Dermal Thickness (partial) '2<sup>nd</sup> degree' and Deep Dermal Thickness (partial) '2<sup>nd</sup> degree'