

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Wounds - The Third Degree

That is third degree burns. And I do not mean from a hot stove, fire, chemical or electrical sources. Today I will discuss burns from clothing. It just happened again. A diabetic patient of mine sat at the poolside for about 3 hours wearing soft black neoprene shoes. The result was a third degree burn. A toe had to be removed from one foot and a large skin graft was needed on the other. How can that be you ask?

A third degree burn can result from exposure to 180 degrees for a second or 140 degrees for 5 seconds. At 120 it may take a few minutes and at 100 to 110 for a few hours. Remember that a hot tub generally runs about 100-103 degrees. Thin skin is easier to burn than thick skin. Those with diminished skin sensation are more susceptible.

I also treated a second degree burn on the stomach surface. A patient wore a black full sized bathing suit at the beach and fell asleep. When it happens slowly the nerve endings become insensate. They stop working. This is true in people of all ages. This can happen to you! Diabetic people are at high risk but older folks have less sensitive skin as well. Children have thin skin. We must all be aware of this hazard.

Sitting on the rooftop cleaning gutters may seem innocuous. Think again. How about a third degree burn on the buttock. Yes it happened. I am not making up these stories. They are real patients. And all the injuries were easily preventable.

The moral of the story is to be aware that you can burn with lower temperatures over an extended period of time. It may not even hurt. We are all at risk. Wear light colored clothing when outside. This includes your shoes!

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
Venice Plastic Surgery, Venice Wound Center, Lakeside Medical Center**

Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

836 Sunset Lake Blvd # 103, Venice, FL 34292
(941) 492-4775