

Keeping Cool

How to Protect Your Child From Burns



Stony Brook **Medicine**



As the designated burn care facility for the residents of Suffolk County, the Suffolk County Volunteer Firefighters Burn Center at Stony Brook University Hospital coordinates burn services throughout the county, and provides a resource for training and research in Burn Care. It also serves as a resource to neighboring community-based hospitals. Its surgical and medical staff provide the most sophisticated care to both adults and children with major burns. Recognized by the American Burn Association, the Burn Center is designed and equipped to meet the special needs of burn patients.

Dear Parent:

Did you know that children, especially those under five years of age, have an increased risk for burn injuries? Most pediatric burns occur at home. Burn safety is one important topic parents should become knowledgeable about.

YOU can keep your child safe from burns by remaining vigilant and using the prevention strategies detailed in this booklet.

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What is a burn?

A thermal burn is a skin injury caused by contact with something hot.

What can cause a burn?

Many things cause burns:

- Coffee
- Tea
- Water
- Soup
- Food
- Steam
- Hot Surfaces (stoves, space heaters, etc.)
- Electrical contact



What are scald burns?

Scald burns are burns caused by hot liquids or steam. Scald burns are the most common pediatric burn injury and can be very serious.



Are all burns the same?

No. There are three kinds of burns.

Burn	Symptom	Action
1st Degree	The skin gets red	Call your doctor if this happens
2nd Degree	The skin gets blisters which may open up	Take your child to the doctor right away
3rd Degree	The skin is severely damaged and might not be able to heal without surgery	Take your child to an Emergency Room immediately. These are very serious burns.

What can I do if my child gets burned?

1. Move your child away from what caused the burn.
2. Remove clothes, diapers and shoes to make sure no other body part is burned.
3. Cool the burn with cool running water for up to 30 minutes.
4. Cover the burned area with a clean, dry sheet.
(Source: American Burn Association)
5. Call 911 or your doctor as soon as possible after a serious burn.

What should I NOT do if my child gets burned?

- Do **NOT** put butter on a burn.
- Do **NOT** put ointment on a burn.
- Do **NOT** put cooking oil on the burn.
- Do **NOT** use ice.
- Do **NOT** rub a burn.
- Do **NOT** break a burn blister.

How long does it take for skin to burn?

Not long at all. Skin, especially baby skin, is very sensitive to heat. Hot tap water can cause severe burns in seconds.

Time it takes skin to burn at this water temperature:

1 second	155° F
2 seconds	150° F
3 seconds	145° F
5 seconds	140° F
10 seconds.....	135° F
30 seconds	130° F
2 minutes.....	125° F
5 minutes.....	120° F



Ask your landlord or a licensed plumber to turn down your hot water to 120° F or less. This is the best way to prevent scald burns from your faucet.

Installing anti-scald devices on your faucet helps too.

Where do burns happen?

Most scald burns happen in the kitchen or the bathroom.

What can I do to help prevent my child from being burned?

The best way to prevent burns is to do a home safety check. Go through your home, room by room, checking for possible burn and fire hazards. Think about the ways a child could get burned and take steps to prevent burns.

How can I do a home safety check to prevent burns ...In the Kitchen?

Ask these questions and follow these steps:

1. Do I watch my child while I am cooking?

Keep an eye on your child when you are cooking. This will help you to be sure he or she is safe from danger.

2. Can my child reach the stove top or grab pot and pan handles?

Cook food on the back burners whenever you can. Then your child can't pull a hot pot on himself or herself, or get burned from frying food. Stoves are safer when the knobs are on the stove top instead of the front.

3. Can my child spill hot food by pulling the tablecloth?

Take the tablecloth off your table. Then your child can't pull the tablecloth and hot food or drinks down onto himself or herself.

4. Are hot food and drinks out of my child's reach?

Your child may reach up and knock hot food and drinks down, causing a scald burn. Put any hot food or liquid in the middle of the table or counter, or in a place where your child can't reach it.

5. Do I hold my child while I have something hot in my hands?

Make sure not to hold your child at the same time you are holding a cup of hot liquid.

6. Is my child at a safe distance when I am taking hot food out of a microwave or oven?

Keep your child away when you are taking hot food out of the microwave or the oven. Know where your child is before you open the oven door.

7. Is my child at a safe distance from a hot appliance?

Talk to your child and explain that hot appliances are not safe. Keep your child away from all appliances, such as the dishwasher, washing machine, dryer or oven when using them. They may be hot.

8. Are electric cords safely out of reach?

Keep electric cords out of your child's reach. Tugging on the cord of a hot pot can cause a hot spill or electric shock.

9. Is there danger near my counter?

Make sure to keep your child off the countertop so he or she cannot reach hot things.

10. Can my child get burned in the kitchen sink?

Never bathe your child under running water. Unexpected surges of hot water from other appliances (dishwasher, washing machine, etc.) can cause scalds. Monitor children closely while bathing. Curious young children may also turn the hot water handle on, unintentionally scalding themselves. Avoid bathing children in kitchen sinks. The hot water handle may be accidentally turned on by the child or adult.



How should I warm my infant's formula?

Never heat a baby's bottle in a microwave oven.

(Source: U.S. Food & Drug Association)

- Use a bottle warmer or submerge the bottle in hot water.
- Turn bottles upside down at least 10 times after heating. This helps to distribute the heat and avoid hot spots in the liquid.
- Formula that is warm to the touch may be too hot to drink. Always test the formula by putting several drops on your tongue or on the inside of your wrist.

How can I do a home safety check to prevent burns ...In the Bathroom?

1. Do I watch my child in the bath?

Always stay with your child when he or she is in the bathtub.

2. Is my water temperature safe?

Turn your water heater down to 120° F (or lower).

3. Do I check my child's bath water?

Check the temperature of the bath water before placing your child in the bath. The temperature should not be higher than 100° F. Use a tub thermometer to check the temperature of the bath water.

4. Can my child turn on the water faucet?

Face your child away from the faucet when he or she is in the tub. Keep your child close to the back of the bathtub. Place a blue sticker on the cold water faucet and a red sticker on the hot water faucet.

5. Do I need anti-scald handles on the faucet?

Put anti-scald handles on the faucets in your bathtub and sink if you cannot lower the water temperature to 120° F.

How should I fill the bathtub?

- Test the water in the tub by putting your whole hand in the water, spreading your fingers wide, and moving your hand quickly back and forth for several seconds.
- If the water feels even a little bit hot, then it is too hot for your child.
- Add more cold water and test again if it feels too hot.
- Water that feels lukewarm (around 100° F) is safe for your child.
- Turn off hot water first when you are bathing your child in the shower.



How can I do a home safety check to prevent burns ...In the Bedroom?

Can my child reach something hot from the crib?

Move your child's crib away from radiators and hot pipes. Keep irons and hot styling tools (curling irons, flat irons, etc.), ashtrays and cigarettes out of your child's reach.

How else can I keep my child safe?

Keep in mind that other things can burn your child.

- | | | |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------|
| • Barbecues | • Irons | • Glue Guns |
| • Fireplaces | • Hairstyling Tools | • Candles |
| • Fire Pits | • Heating Blankets | • Cigarettes |
| • Coal Stoves | • Lamps | • Sun |
| • Radiators | • Light Bulbs | |

Keep flammable liquids and chemicals behind childproof locks.

CONGRATULATIONS!

By doing these simple things, you have taken a BIG STEP toward protecting your child from burns.

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