

79% of severe burns to children  
HAPPEN IN THE HOME



Burns Safety  
Around the Home

Severe burn injury can be life threatening, and even small burns can be dangerous for young children. All are painful and can have a lasting impact on your life.

The majority of burns are **PREVENTABLE** and by being aware and making small changes, you can help to keep you and your family safe!

Reduce the risk  
of burns around  
your home  
and keep your  
family safe!



## *Reduce burns around the home:*

- Never drink a hot drink while holding a baby or young child. ☐
- Use power boards instead of 'piggy-backing' double adapters. ☐
- Block power points with safety plugs. ☐
- Keep matches and lighters in secure cupboards and out of reach of children. ☐
- Install smoke alarms and replace batteries every year at the start of winter. ☐
- Keep candles away from curtains and other materials and never leave them unattended. ☐
- Use fire guards to shield young children from falling against combustion heaters or open fires and to stop sparks from escaping. ☐
- Keep young children away from treadmills or use a safety guard. ☐
- Keep buckets of hot water out of reach of young children. ☐
- Sit at least a metre from the heater when keeping warm. ☐
- Keep drying clothes at least a metre away from the heater. ☐
- Regularly clean lint filters for clothes dryers. ☐
- Ensure your home is fitted with a working electrical safety switch. ☐

## *Reduce burns in the bedroom:*

- Ensure children's nightwear is labelled as 'Low Fire Danger'. ☐
- Replace hot water bottles every year. ☐
- Follow heating instructions for wheat bags and hot water bottles and remove them from the bed before getting in. ☐
- Switch off electric blankets prior to getting in bed. ☐
- Never use heat packs or hot water bottles directly on skin. ☐

## *Reduce burns in the bathroom:*

Lower the delivery temperature of hot water in your bathroom and ensuite to a maximum 50°C. **Hot water from the tap at 60°C can burn a young child in less than a second!** Contact a licensed plumber to install mixing valves that safely lower the delivery temperature of water. ☐

Always supervise children when they are in the bath or shower. ☐

Turn the cold water tap on first and off last. ☐

## *Reduce burns in the kitchen:*

Keep cups of hot drinks out of reach of children. ☐

Install a barrier to the kitchen to keep young children away from cooking areas. ☐

Place appliance cords and saucepan handles towards the back of benches, tables and stoves. ☐

Keep kettles, jugs and teapots away from the edge of benches or tables. ☐

Do not move pots of hot oil or water across the kitchen. ☐

Place the microwave out of reach of young children but at a chest height for adults. ☐

Check the temperature of food cooked in a microwave after it has been stirred before eating. ☐

Spend time with your child teaching them basic kitchen safety. This can be done using toy kitchen sets or while cooking together. ☐

Purchase and use oven mitts. ☐

Keep a fire blanket and fire extinguisher near the kitchen and easily accessible. ☐



Check bath water before placing a child in the water – if it feels too hot on the inside of your wrist it will be hot enough to burn a baby or young child within seconds. If unsure use a water temperature gauge to test the water. ☐

Unplug and store hair dryers, straighteners and curlers in a secure cupboard. ☐

Teach your child about the potential dangers of electrical appliances. ☐

Install grip bars and rubber mats in the shower and bath to prevent slips or falls. ☐

## *Reduce burns outside:*

Store chemicals and poisonous substances in original containers. ☐

Secure and store all chemicals out of reach of children. ☐

Wear gloves when fitting a gas cylinder to the BBQ. Have the cylinder, hose and connections checked regularly. ☐

Allow lawn mowers or other motorised equipment to cool before filling with petrol or cleaning with solvents. ☐

Wait for the car radiator to cool before releasing the cap (this may take 20 minutes). ☐

Encourage children to play in shade and to wear hats and suitable clothing when they are outside. ☐

Always extinguish fires and campfires with water, never sand or dirt. ☐

## *Burn injury statistics*

- Children aged 12–24 months account for 33% of paediatric burn injury cases.
- The most common cause of burn injury to children is scalds (57%) followed by contact (23%) and flame (10%) injuries.
- Hot beverages are the most common cause of scald injury to children followed by water from a saucepan, kettle, jug, billy, urn or thermos and scald injury from food.
- 79% of burn injuries to children occur in the home environment.
- The kitchen is the most common location in the house for a child to be burned (50% of cases). The next most common location is the living room, playroom or family room (18%) and the garden or yard (12%).
- Flame burns are the predominant cause of burn injury for adolescents aged 11–19.

*DATA SOURCE: BURNS REGISTRY OF AUSTRALIA AND  
NEW ZEALAND, ANNUAL REPORT 2016/2017*



# Burns First Aid



## **+ REMOVE**

Remove all jewellery from around the burn area. Remove any clothing and nappies around the burn area **unless it is stuck to the skin.**

## **+ COOL**

Cool the burn under cool running water for 20 minutes. Cool the burn, warm the patient.

**DO NOT** use ice or creams as this can further damage the skin.

## **+ COVER**

Cover the burn loosely with cling wrap or a clean, damp lint-free cloth.

## **+ SEEK**

Seek immediate medical advice if the burn is:

- + larger than a 20 cent coin
- + on the face, hands, groin or feet
- + deep or infected
- + caused by chemicals, electricity or if signs of inhalation injury (blackening around mouth or nostrils, swelling of airways) are evident.

**In an Emergency call 000 or 112 if your mobile is out of range or credit.**

For further medical information contact your local Burns Unit or Hospital.

Kidsafe is here to assist you. This is general information and if you require specific advice please contact us to discuss further.

Kidsafe is the leading independent, not-for-profit organisation dedicated to the prevention of unintentional death and serious injury to children aged 0–15 years. We are committed to reducing the incidence and impact of unintentional injury.



NATIONAL  
BurnsAwareness  
MONTH

For more information, contact Kidsafe:  
[www.kidsafe.com.au](http://www.kidsafe.com.au)

