



SCALD BURNS

Fire Is Not the Major Cause of Burn Injuries in children, SCALD BURNS ARE

In fact, at Stony Brook University Hospital, 87% of all our pediatric burn patients in 2014 were hospitalized because of burns from hot liquids or objects. For children ages 4 and under, 100% of our hospital admissions were for such burns.

Scald burns are burns caused by hot liquid or steam. They usually happen in the kitchen when someone is cooking or in the bathtub when the water is too hot. Children's skin is thinner than an adults which makes them more sensitive to a burn.

Scald burns can be prevented. Nearly 75% of all scald burns in children are preventable, according to the [latest data](#).

Keep these safety tips in mind when handling hot liquids:

- Install anti-scald devices on shower heads and tub faucets.
- Set your water heater thermostat to 120° F (49° C) or below.
- Check the water temperature with your elbow, wrist, or bath thermometer before bathing your child.
- When cooking, put your toddler in a safe area, such a high chair or play pen.
- Be careful with microwave soup containers, as they are a frequent source of scald burns.
- Open microwaved containers away from you and your child, as the steam can scald the skin.
- Test microwaved foods and drinks before giving them to a young child.
- Do not heat baby bottles in the microwave, as the heat may be unevenly distributed.
- In the kitchen, place any hot liquids to the back of countertops or the center of your table, away from the grasp of young children.
- Never carry a child while carrying a hot drink or hot food.
- Do not use tablecloths or placemats around young children, as they can pull on them and spill hot food or drinks.

First aid for scald burns is the same as for burns caused by fire:

1. First, remove the source of heat from the injury. If the burn is at least second degree (blistered skin), remove any clothing from the site, unless it is already stuck to the skin. Cool the burn for about 10-15 minutes with cool or lukewarm water, as by running tap water over it.
2. Ice should never be applied to a burn, as it can do further damage to the area around the injury.
3. Blisters in second-degree burns should never be popped. This only increases chances of infection. It is best to wrap the injury very loosely to keep it clean, and seek expert medical attention. Do not place butter, toothpaste, or specialized creams on the burn.

Share these tips with all caregivers. Be sure to speak with your child's babysitter and other caregivers about preventing scald burns, especially if they will be bathing your child or cooking around them.

For more information, please visit: www.safekids.org/safetytips/field_risks/burns-and-scalds