

## Preventing burns and scalds by



Burns and scalds are a common cause of injury for Australian children. Toddlers are at greatest risk as they are naturally curious and don't understand the danger of hot objects, hot water, or flames. Most child burn and scald injuries occur in the home, with the kitchen being the most common area.

A child's skin is thinner and more sensitive than that of an adult and will therefore result in a more severe burn. Injuries from burns or scalds can cause a great deal of pain for a significant period of time and often result in scarring; in some cases, skin grafts are required. This can be traumatising for not only the child but for the entire family.

The majority of burns are preventable - by being aware and making small changes, you can reduce the risk of burns occurring.

Kidsafe's top burns prevention tips:

- Ensure children are kept out of the kitchen, especially during meal preparation times.
- Use the rear hotplates and ensure pot handles are turned inward, away from the edge of the stove.
- Place hot food and drink out of reach of children and avoid holding a child when having a hot drink.
- Replace tablecloths with non-slip placemats to avoid children pulling hot objects onto themselves.
- Keep electrical items like irons, kettles and hair straighteners out of reach of children.
- Install guards around heaters and fireplaces, and teach children to stay away from these.
- Keep items like clothing, curtains and toys at least one metre away from heaters.
- Control the delivery temperature of hot water in your bathroom to a maximum of 50°C.

If your child sustains a burn or scald, follow the following first aid steps:

- REMOVE - any clothing, nappies and jewellery unless stuck to the skin.
- COOL - place the burn under cool running water for 20 minutes. Never use items like ice, oil or butter as these can make the burn worse.
- COVER - the burn site with a clean dressing.
- SEEK - medical attention if clothing is stuck to the skin, if the burn is on the face, hands, lap or feet, or if the burn is larger than a 20 cent piece.
- In an emergency, call 000.

For more information, visit the links below:

- [Burns Safety Checklist](#)