For Parents and Caregivers

BURN SAFETY

Why We CARE

32% increase between 2019 and 2020, attributable in part to the pandemic, when more time was spent at home, where most burns occur.

75% of burns in children under age 5 result from scalding with hot liquids, tap water, or steam.

#5 Fire and burn injuries are the fifth-leading cause of accidental-injury death in children ages 5 to 19.

Did You Know?

Children under age 4 do not yet have the mental capacity to know to avoid hot liquids.

How to PLAY IT SAFE

- Teach your child the word “hot” as early as possible.
- Keep your child away from anything that could ever be hot to the touch (heaters, candles, lighters, etc.).
- Remove pull-down hazards. Turn pot handles to the back. Hide electrical cords, hair appliances, etc.
- Create a No Kid Zone when cooking. Use baby gates and high chairs. Use only back burners.
- Heat baby bottles in warm water—not the microwave, which heats both breast milk and formula unevenly and could scald a baby’s mouth.
- Avoid carrying or consuming hot foods or liquids when holding your child.
- Transfer instant soups like ramen into sturdier containers to avoid spills.
- Forbid children under 5 from using the microwave without an adult to help.

Bath Time

- Set the water heater to 120°F (48°C) or lower or place anti-scald devices on faucets and shower heads.
- Check bath water temperature with your wrist or elbow BEFORE placing child in bath or sink—every time!
- Never leave a child or baby alone in the bathroom. If you need to leave even for a few seconds, take them with you.

FIRST AID

1. Run cool (not cold) water over the burn for at least 5 minutes to stop the burning process. Do not apply ice!
2. Do not break any blisters! These will heal over time and help prevent infection.
3. Remove all clothing and diaper from around the burn; leave any stuck portions.
4. Cover and protect the burn with dry, sterile gauze bandage or clean cloth. This keeps the burn clean, reduces pain, and can prevent infection.
5. Treat the pain with either acetaminophen or ibuprofen (if older than 6 months).
6. Do not apply butter, lotions, oils, or sprays to the burn.
7. Look for these signs of infection as it heals: swelling, pus, or increasing redness or red streaks near the burn. Contact your pediatrician with concerns.

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION if a burn is blistering, swollen, and larger than your child’s hand or if the burn is on the hand, foot, face, or genitals, or over a joint.

Call 911 for electrical burns.

PLAY IT SAFE with poison prevention, safe sleep, firearms, teen driving, and more at gaaap.org/toolkit

For data sources and additional information visit gaaap.org/toolkit

Funded in part by Emory University Department of Pediatrics

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