

Preventing Burns in the Home

Kitchen Safety

- Never leave cooking unattended – big fires start small. If a fire starts on the stove, use a potholder or oven mitt and carefully slide a lid or cookie sheet onto the pot and turn the element off.
- Avoid wearing loose fitting clothing while cooking. They can ignite quickly.
- Always turn burners and oven off when not in use.
- Use oven mitts or potholders when cooking.
- Pot handles should always be turned to the back of the stove to prevent pots from being knocked off. Hot food or liquids should never be left near the edge of the counter or table where a child could pull them down.

Safety for Children

- Check the temperature before putting your child in the bathtub. Add cool water if the water feels too hot.
- Children need to have constant supervision during outdoor cookouts.
- Hot irons should never be left unattended.
- Wall outlets should be covered with safety devices and damaged or frayed cords should be replaced immediately.
- Children should not play near wood stoves, fireplaces and space heaters. Teach children that familiar household items are sometimes hot and can cause a burn.

Tools not Toys!

Children can be taught about matches, lighters, and fire. At a young age it is important to teach them the proper functions for these tools.

- Teach children that matches and lighters are tools for adults, not toys for children to play with.
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children. Store them up high where children cannot reach or see them, preferably in a locked cabinet.
- Teach children to tell a grown-up when they find matches or lighters; older children should bring matches or lighters to an adult immediately.

Degree of Burns

Burns are classified by the amount of damage done to the skin and other body tissue. In order to properly treat a burn, it is important to identify its severity.

- **First-degree burns:** are minor and heal fast.
Indicators: reddened skin; tender and sore.
- **Second-degree burns:** are serious injuries and require immediate medical attention.
Indicators: blistered skin; very painful.

- **Third-degree burns:** are severe injuries and require immediate professional medical attention. Indicators: white, brown or charred tissue, often surrounded by blistered areas; little or no pain at first.

Cool a burn

- Immediately cool a burn by placing it under cool water for 10-15 minutes. Cool water reduces skin damage and minimizes the pain.
- NEVER use butter, lotions, ice or ointments. This only seals the heat in.
- Don't break blisters. This could cause infection.
- Apply a clean, dry dressing to a first-degree burn after cooling. Second and third-degree burns require immediate medical attention.