



Every day, 300 young children with burn injuries are taken to emergency rooms.

They haven't even been near a flame. The children are victims of scalds.

Scald burns (caused by hot liquids, steam or foods) are the most common burn injury among children age 4 and younger. In 2003, U.S. hospitals treated an estimated 16,000 children under 5 for scalds, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. And, mortality rates from scalds are highest for children younger than age 4.

While the injuries and the numbers are distressing, even more disturbing is the fact that many of these burns could have been prevented.



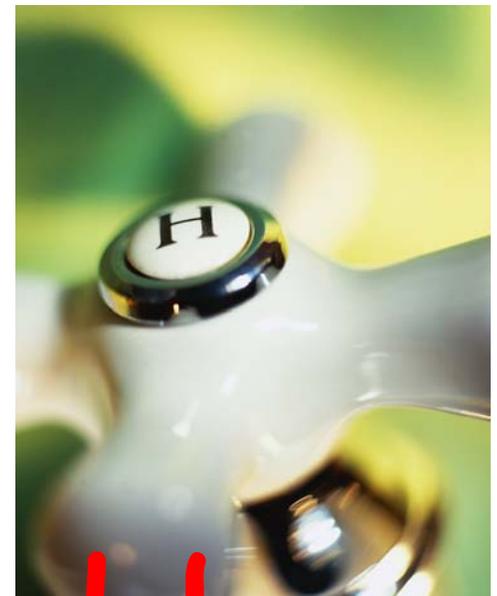
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**SCALD
BURNS
HURT**



H **HEAT:**
It doesn't take
flames to burn

How Scalds Happen

Ninety-five percent of scalds occur in residences. Scald burns are typically related to ordinary activities — bathing, cooking and eating — and often happen to children because of a lapse in adult supervision or a lack of protective measures. Youngsters may not understand or even be aware of potential dangers of hot liquids (especially water) and foods; they simply trust adults to keep them safe.

In addition, young children have thinner skin that burns more quickly than adults'. People of all ages can be burned in 30 seconds by a flowing liquid that is 130° F; at 140° F, it takes only five seconds; at 160° degrees, it only takes one second. For children younger than 5, these temperatures can cause a burn in half the time.

Preventing Scalds

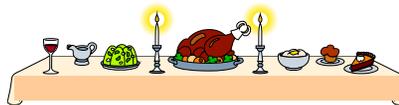
According to the National Safe Kids Campaign, most scalds occur while bathing. Continuous supervision of young children is the most important factor in preventing tap-water scald injuries, but there are additional simple preventive measures that can be taken. These include lowering the temperature settings on water heaters to 120° F or less and installing anti-scald devices on water faucets and showerheads.



When bathing a child, fill the bathtub with cold water first. Mix in warmer water carefully and place the child away from the faucet. The bath water temperature should be about 100° F. Test the water temperature by moving a hand rapidly through the water. If the water feels hot to an adult, it is too hot for a child.



Some tips to prevent scalds in the kitchen include testing heated food and liquids before serving children and keeping young children away from cooking and sink areas when in use.



Also, be aware that toddlers can pull on tablecloths and appliance cords, spilling hot items on themselves, so it is important to keep foods and liquids

away from the edges of counters and tables.

Another safety tip is to avoid using area rugs in the kitchen. They can contribute to falls, which could lead to scalds.

These suggestions may seem obvious and simple, but given the statistics, they can't be repeated too often.

Act Quickly

If you witness a burn, or burn yourself, the sooner you act, the better. Immerse the affected area in cool clean water for 5 minutes. This will stop further damage from occurring. Do not put ice on the burn. Do not apply butter or ointments to burns. Do not pop any blisters. They will go away as the skin heals itself.

Apply a non-stick clean dressing. Gently change the dressing and clean the area at least once a day, more often if it gets dirty. If blisters break, wash the area with mild soap and water, then apply an antibiotic ointment and a clean dressing.

See a healthcare provider if you notice signs of infection, such as redness around the area, swelling, heat, pus or failure to heal in a few days.

Seek emergency medical assistance if a burn:

- involves the hands, feet, face, genitals or a large joint.
- is larger than 2 to 3 inches in diameter.