

Burns can be reduced in the bathroom by...

- lowering the delivery temperature of hot water to 50°C – hot water from the tap at 60°C can burn a young child in less than a second! Contact a licensed plumber to install mixing valves that safely lower the delivery temperature of water
- ensuring children are always supervised in the bath or shower
- turning the cold water tap on first and off last

Burns can be reduced around the home by...

- keeping matches and lighters in secure cupboards and out of reach of children
- using fire guards to shield young children from falling against combustion heaters or open fires and to stop sparks from escaping
- encouraging children to play in the shade and to wear hats and suitable clothing when they are outside

Why are Older People at Risk?

Outcomes for older people suffering a burn injury are usually poorer than for younger people with similar injuries. This is due to age-related changes to the body's physiology. As we get older we have a decreased ability to cope with the stresses placed on our bodies following an injury.

As we age, our skin becomes thinner, more fragile and drier, therefore burning more quickly and more deeply at lower temperatures. There can also be a reduction in our:

- reaction time
- dexterity
- mobility

Planning for future safety for yourselves and your family is important. Make simple changes around the home to prevent burn injuries and keep yourself and your family safe.

Burns First Aid

Remove

all jewellery from around the burn area. Remove any clothing around the burn area unless it is stuck to the skin.

Cool

the burn under cool running water for 20 minutes. DO NOT use ice or creams as this can further damage the skin.

Cover

the burn loosely with cling wrap or a clean, damp lint-free cloth.

Seek

immediate medical advice if the burn is:

- larger than a 20 cent coin
- on the face, hands, groin or feet
- deep or infected
- caused by chemicals, electricity or if signs of inhalation injury (blackening around mouth or nostrils, swelling of airways) are evident

In an Emergency call **000** or 112 if on a mobile if it is out of range or credit.

For further medical information contact your local Burns Unit or hospital.

To find out more about the Julian Burton Burns Trust, or to donate, find us at:

www.burnstrust.com.au



CHANGING BODIES, CHANGING NEEDS



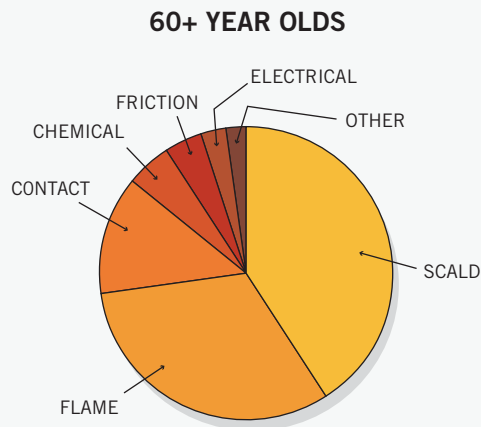
Most burns for people 60 years and older happen while cooking

Severe burn injury can be life threatening, and even small burns can be dangerous for the very young and the elderly. All are painful and can drastically affect your life; physically, socially, psychologically, emotionally and financially.

The majority of burns are **PREVENTABLE** and by making small behavioural or environmental changes, you can help to keep your family safe!

Causes

For the 60 years and over age group scald burns are the predominant cause of burn injury. The most common activity at the time of injury is cooking, caused either by fat or oil spills or water from saucepans and kettles.



Data Source: Bi-National Burn Registry, 2011/2012
(Australia & New Zealand)

HOW CAN OLDER PEOPLE STAY SAFE?

Make simple changes around the house to suit your changing needs.

Burns can be reduced around the home by...

- using power boards instead of “piggy-backing” double adapter
- sitting at least a metre from the heater when keeping warm
- when drying/airing clothes, keep them at least a metre from the heater
- replacing hot water bottles every year
- never using heat packs or hot water bottles directly on skin, especially areas that have reduced sensation
- following heating instructions for wheat bags and hot water bottles and removing them from the bed before getting in
- switching off electric blankets prior to getting in bed
- keeping candles away from curtains and other materials and never leaving them unattended
- installing smoke alarms and replacing batteries every year at the start of winter
- regularly cleaning lint filters for clothes dryers
- ensuring your home is fitted with a working electrical safety switch

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- turning the cold water tap on first and off last
- installing grip bars and rubber mats in the shower and bath to prevent slips or falls

Burns can be reduced in the kitchen by...

- using a smaller capacity or lighter weight kettle
- placing the microwave at a safe height, about chest height, and in an easy to reach location
- never carrying pots of hot oil or hot water across the kitchen
- purchasing and using oven mitts
- keeping a fire blanket and fire extinguisher near the kitchen and easily accessible
- moving appliance cords and saucepan handles towards the back of benches, tables and stoves
- keeping kettles, jugs and teapots away from the edge of benches or tables
- checking the temperature of food cooked in a microwave after it has been stirred before consuming

Keeping Young Children Safe

Looking after young children is a rewarding but very busy time. The most common type of burn injury for children aged 0-5 years is scalds. Most scald burns in this age group are due to young children mimicking adult behaviour. This frequently results in burn injuries caused by pulling down hot drinks off tables, reaching up to grab handles of saucepans or by playing with the taps in the bath.

Burns can be reduced in the kitchen by...

- keeping cups of hot drinks out of reach of children
- never drinking a hot drink while holding a baby or young child
- moving appliance cords and saucepan handles towards the back of benches, tables and stoves
- placing the microwave out of reach of toddlers
- checking the temperature of food cooked in a microwave after it has been stirred
- keeping young children out of the kitchen when cooking

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