



Scald Prevention For Young Children

- In 2002, 22,600 children under the age of 15 were treated in hospital emergency rooms for scald burns.
- Children ages four and under are at the greatest risk of burn-related death and injury, scald burn injuries being the most common type.
- In 2002, nine children under the age of five died as a result of injuries received from scalding.
- The majority of scalds to young children result from spilled food and beverages, followed by contact with hot objects, and hot tap water.
- Most scald burn-related injuries among young children could be prevented through behavioral and environmental modifications.



Unintentional tap water scalds can be prevented by following these tips:

- Lower the temperature of the water heater to no more than 120° F, and consider installing anti-scald devices in water faucets and showerheads.
- Always check the temperature of the water before placing a child in a bath (100°F or less is safe temperature for bathing).
- Do not leave a child unattended in the bathtub or sink or allow them to be supervised by anyone other than an adult.
- When soaking materials in a sink/bathtub or when running bath water, shut or lock the door to keep children from contact with hot water.

Other scalds can be prevented by:

- Providing constant supervision for children.
- Refraining from holding a child while drinking hot beverages, eating hot foods, cooking food, or preparing bottles.
- Allowing food or drink to cool out of reach of young children.
- Keeping the kitchen off limits to children while food is being prepared.
- Using back burners and placing pan/pot handles towards the back of the stove where little hands cannot reach them.
- Not allowing the cords to household appliances to hang free and in the reach of children.
- Finding a safe place for hot grease to cool.

If a scald occurs, actions that may lessen the severity of a burn include:

- Removing clothing to stop on-going heat injury.
- Slowly cooling the injury with tap water for 30 minutes. Cooling decreases the depth of burning and is the appropriate first aid measure for all thermal burns.
- Ice should *NOT* be used because of the risk of producing hypothermia. Ice may also shut down circulation to the damaged skin and increase the death of tissue.
- Butter and other types of salves should *NOT* be used on scald injuries.