

This issue, along with additional activities and online resources is available at:

[www.burnprevention.org/safety-lines-may-2015](http://www.burnprevention.org/safety-lines-may-2015)

*Every year, 450,000 burn injuries are treated in the US.  
As many as 150,000 of those are SCALD BURNS.*

*Young children are particularly at risk for this type of burn injury. In this issue, learn more about scald burns and how to prevent them from happening in your home!*

# Safety Lines

## WHAT IS A SCALD INJURY?

A scald injury occurs when hot liquid or hot steam damages one or more layers of skin that it comes into contact with. Scald burns are usually caused by a spill of hot food or beverages, or by hot tap water in a bath or shower.



## WHO IS AT RISK?

Anyone can get a scald burn. But older adults and **YOUNG CHILDREN** are at greater risk than the rest of the population.

***62% of all burns to young children are scalds!***

## WHY ARE CHILDREN AT HIGHER RISK FOR SCALDS?

- Young children **LOVE** to imitate adults. They may pretend to cook just like an adult they've seen without realizing that hot food or liquids or hot tap water can be dangerous.
- Young children are also less mobile, and can't react as quickly as an adult if they come into contact with a hot object or substance.
- Young children have thinner skin than older children and adults, so they suffer a burn injury at a lower temperature and in less time.
- Spilling a cup of coffee or other hot drink can cover a large part of a small child's body. This would cause a much larger burn on a small child than it would on an adult.



## HOW DO SCALD BURNS HAPPEN?

**84% of scald burns happen in the home!**

Some of the ways a scald burn can happen are:

- Spills of hot coffee or tea
- Spills of hot foods (like soup) tipped from the stove or countertop or while being carried
- Spills of food or beverages cooked or heated in the microwave
- Hot tap water, in the sink, shower or bath tub



## SCALD SAFETY CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to make your home safer for your family!



- Set your water heater to **120 degrees F/ 48 degrees C**, or just below the medium setting.
- Use a thermometer to **test the water** coming out of your bath tap.
- Run your hand through the bath water to test for **hot spots**.
- Never leave a small child **alone** in the **bathtub**.
- Never hold or carry a child while you have a **hot drink** in your hand.
- Stir and test** food cooked in the microwave before serving. Open containers heated in the microwave **away from you** from back to front.
- Keep children away from the stove when cooking by using a **safety gate** for younger children and marking with tape a **3-foot “no-kid zone”** for older children.
- Keep hot drinks away from the edge of tables and counters and **avoid using tablecloths and placemats**.
- Use a **“travel mug”** with a tight fitting lid for all hot drinks.
- Use **oven mitts** when cooking or handling hot food and drinks.
- Use the **back burners** and turn pot handles toward the back of the stove so children cannot pull them down.
- Be sure your **path is clear** when carrying or serving food (pets, children, toys, etc.)



For more information, visit  
[www.burnprevention.org/safety-lines-may-2015](http://www.burnprevention.org/safety-lines-may-2015).



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