



Children's Health  
Education Center™

*A member of Children's Hospital and Health System.*



**Safe Kids**  
Southeast Wisconsin  
LEAD AGENCY: CHILDREN'S  
HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

To learn more about  
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# Scald burn safety

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Among children ages 4 and younger hospitalized for burn-related injuries, approximately 65 percent are treated for scald burns. The majority of scald burns children experience, especially in ages 6 months to 2 years, are from hot foods and liquids spilled in the kitchen or wherever food is prepared and served. At Children's Hospital of Wisconsin's Emergency Department/Trauma Center, more than 50 children are treated for injuries related to scald burns each year. Hot tap water accounts for nearly 1 in 4 of all scald burns among children. It's also associated with more deaths and hospitalizations than any other hot liquid burns, according to Safe Kids USA.

## Follow these tips to protect your child from scald burns

### In the kitchen

- Don't drink hot liquids around children.
- Cook on the rear burners of the stove and turn pot handles to the back of the stove.
- Never leave cooking food unattended.
- Children should not use microwaves because they have a greater risk of spilling dangerously hot contents.
- Keep children out of the kitchen while preparing hot foods and when moving food from one area to another.
- Make sure appliances and their cords are safely out of reach of children. Hot liquids in coffee and crock pots, and other cooking appliances can be pulled down on top of a child.
- Avoid using a tablecloth as children may pull on it. Keep hot foods toward the center of the table out of children's reach.

### In the bathroom

- Children have much more sensitive skin than adults. Temperatures that are comfortable for an adult may scald a child.
- Be sure your water heater is turned down to 120°F (low to warm setting). Most newly installed water heaters are set at temperatures ranging from 140°F to 150°F.
- Never leave your child unattended in the bathroom and do not allow him or her to turn the water on by his- or herself.
- Test the water with a thermometer before putting your child in the tub and swirl the water to remove any hot spots.
- Never run the water while your child is in the tub.
- Install anti-scald devices on faucets and shower heads.

In an instant, your child could be **seriously scalded**

| Type of liquid                                      | Temperature | Time               |
|---|-------------|--------------------|
| Boiling water from a kettle                         | 212°F       | Less than 1 second |
| Cup of hot tea/coffee                               | 158-203°F   | Less than 1 second |
| Hot water from a tap                                | 140°F       | 1 second           |
| Hot water from a kettle, 5-10 minutes after boiling | 131°F       | 10 seconds         |
| Hot water from a tap with a temperature regulator   | 122°F       | 5 minutes          |

