

# Burns

## Call

### Call the doctor if your child's burn:

- Involves the hands, feet, face, or genitals.
- Is an electrical burn.
- Is blistering.
- Covers more than 1% of their body (an area about the size of your child's palm).
- Continues to be painful and red after a few hours.

### Burns

Burns are caused by a variety of agents and different burn types require different treatments. Burns that seem minor can be serious if not treated appropriately. Burns can cause permanent scarring and problems with joint motion.

### What can I do to take care of a child with a burn?

- Run the burn under cold water, or submerge it in cool water. Do not use ice.
- If your child was burned by a chemical, remove any clothing that may have the chemical on it.
- Cover the burn with clean gauze.
- Do not use home remedies such as butter, cooking grease, or toothpaste on a burn. These can make the burn worse.

### Burn Prevention

- Keep matches, lighters and ashtrays out of the reach of children.
- Childproof all electrical outlets with plastic plugs, even if the outlets are covered by furniture.
- Replace all frayed, broken or worn electrical cords.
- Never leave irons, curling irons, grills, radiators and ovens unattended with children nearby.
- Unplug all appliances after using them.
- Never leave a child alone in the kitchen when food is cooking.
- Turn off stove burners and ovens when they are not being used.
- Cook on the back burners when possible. Keep pot handles pointed toward the back of the stove so children cannot grab them.
- Do not leave spoons or other utensils in pots while cooking.
- Test the temperature of infant formula with your forearm before giving it to your baby. Do not heat your child's bottle in a microwave oven.
- Lower the thermostat on your water heater so that the temperature at the tap is less than 120 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent scalding.
- When using tap water, always turn on the cold water first, and then add hot. When finished, turn off the hot water first.
- Test the temperature of bath water with your forearm or the back of your hand before placing your child in the water.
- Place protective grills in front of fireplaces.
- Make sure your home has a fire extinguisher and smoke alarms with working batteries.
- Teach older children to "stop, drop, and roll" if their clothes catch on fire.

### The Facts:

Injuries are the leading cause of death in children aged 1-21 years. It is extremely important that parents take all possible steps to keep children in a safe environment because most injuries are preventable. If your child is injured, it is important to act quickly and get your child the appropriate help. Several common injuries and ways to prevent them are addressed below. These include burns, animal bites, cuts, broken bones, poison ingestion, choking, strangulation, and drowning. Head injuries and their prevention are discussed in a separate section.