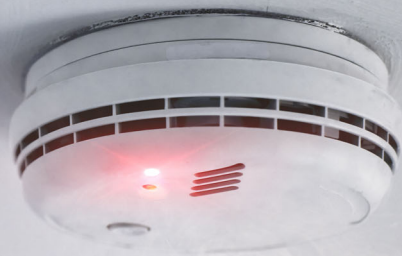


# BURNS AWARENESS



Every year thousands of people suffer burn injuries and many die as a result of a burn. Burns take a second to occur and a lifetime to overcome. Burn victims face prolonged and painful treatment. In many cases, burn victims are physically disabled and scarred for life. Most burns occur in and around the home.



## TYPES OF BURNS

- Open fire e.g., candles, cooking, paraffin, traditional stoves and braai fires
- Fluids e.g., boiling water, tea, coffee and oil
- Electrical e.g., electricity, lightning
- Chemicals e.g., pool acids, rust and paint removers, paraffin
- Sunburn can cause serious damage to the skin.



## PREVENTING BURNS FROM FLUIDS

- Keep electrical cords short and out of reach. Better yet, invest in a cordless kettle.
- Always pour cold water first (and always test the temperature) when pouring water into a basin, bucket or bath.
- Turn the hot water cylinder down to approximately 50 degrees Celsius.
- Turn saucepan handles to the back of the stove to prevent hot liquid burns.
- Put all hot drinks, hot cooking oil and hot porridge out of reach of children.



## PREVENTING ELECTRICITY BURNS

- Use safety plugs in wall sockets and fix faulty sockets or frayed electrical cords immediately.
- Don't overload power points or run electrical wires under carpets. This could start a fire.



## PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN

In South Africa, 256 children suffer burns every day. A child's skin is thinner than an adult's. This makes them more susceptible to harsher burns that have long-term impacts. Careless adults put children in danger. Everyone should be aware, take care and know how to prevent burn accidents.

### Some useful pointers to prevent children from burning:

- Always supervise children near open fires, candles, paraffin lamps and portable stoves.
- Always store matches and lighters safely out of reach of children.
- Keep anything that can catch fire, such as clothing, tablecloths and curtains away from open flames.
- Immediately extinguish wood and coal fires with water when you don't need them.
- Immediately extinguish paraffin, oil or petrol fires with sand or a fire extinguisher.
- Braai fires should be put out with water. Hot sand burns. Badly burnt feet are no holiday treat.
- Don't let children play around any fire places.
- Never go to sleep with a burning heater, candle, lamp or fire.
- Keep portable stoves out of reach of children, and away from curtains.



## WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE:

1. Get out and stay out.
2. Crawl low under the smoke to exit. Air is cleaner on the floor.
3. Call the emergency services (0861 746 548).
4. What to do if your clothes catches alight:
  - a. **STOP**
  - b. **DROP** to the ground.
  - c. **ROLL** around to put out the flames

A blanket or jacket may also help to smother the flames.



## FIRST AID FOR BURNS

- 1. Remove the victim to safety**  
Remove person from the area/source of heat.
- 2. Remove clothing**  
Remove clothing from the burnt area. Do not remove if stuck to the skin.
- 3. Cool the burn**  
Run cool water over the burn or submerge the burnt area, for 10 – 15 minutes.
- 4. Cover the burnt area**  
Cover the burn with a clean non-sticking dressing or cloth. Do not break blisters and do not apply anything on the burnt area, especially butter or any oil-based products as the oil can trap the heat and make the burn deeper over time.
- 5. Get further treatment**  
Call an ambulance (0861 746 548) or take the victim to the nearest clinic.

[www.childsafe.org.za](http://www.childsafe.org.za)