

# National Burns Awareness Month

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## Teacher's Guide

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# Background

National Burns Awareness Month is a campaign ran by Kidsafe Australia and ANZBA (Australian and New Zealand Burns Association) throughout the month of June, to raise awareness of burns first aid and burns and scalds prevention.

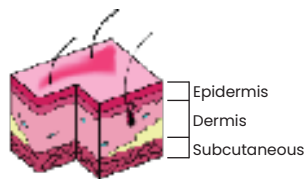
Burn and scald injury is one of the top three causes of unintentional injury in children under the age of 5 in Australia.

Most burn injuries are preventable and appropriate first aid can minimise the impact and severity of a burn injury.

## About Burn Injuries

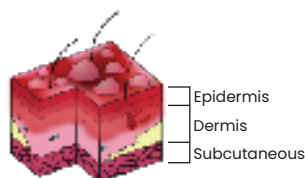
Our skin is the body's largest organ and has many functions including moderating our temperature, retaining and maintaining fluid levels in the body, protecting us from bacteria and infections and is responsible for gathering sensory information. Burns are an injury to any layer of the skin and are caused by extreme heat or cold, contact with electricity, chemicals, friction or radiation. Burn severity is measured according to the depth of skin damage.

### Superficial thickness burn (first degree)



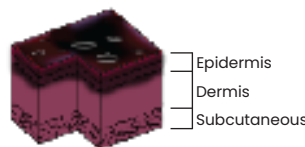
Affects the outer layer or epidermis. Common symptoms include localised redness and pain.

### Partial thickness burn (second degree)



Affects the second layer of skin (the dermis). Symptoms include blisters, clear fluid emitting from the site and localised pain or a whitish appearance for a deeper burn and deeper damage. This burn may have limited associated pain due to damage to the blood vessels and nerve endings.

### Full thickness burn (third degree)



Often leaves a hard leather like eschar (a dry dark scab) purple fluid and little or no pain due to the depth of damage. Skin may appear whitish or black depending on the type of burn.

# Impact of Severe Burn Injuries

## **Education and Family**

Children who return from a lengthy hospital stay may struggle fitting back into the classroom; coping with missed work, fitting back in with friends, as well as dealing with the emotional, physical and social impacts of a burn injury, which can have a serious and lengthy effect on the child's self esteem.

## **Social and Emotional**

The physical effect of a burn can be difficult for anyone, but especially those who are still growing and developing their identity in their immediate world.

## **Physical**

Scarring is especially of concern if over a joint and the scarring prevents normal function. Children with severe burns can expect a hospital stay from 1 week up to 1 year, which is likely to have a serious impact on the family's working life and finances as well as on the child's education.

## **Surgery**

Many burns survivors are affected by their burns for life. A deep partial or full thickness burn can cause the skin to scar, which if over a large area can require ongoing operations to release contractures (skin contracting) or to enhance the skin's appearance.

# Correct Burns First Aid

## **REMOVE jewellery and clothing from the burn area (if not stuck to the skin).**

Clothing, nappies and jewellery can hinder the healing process in two ways. Clothing and jewellery can retain heat and can also restrict the body if swelling occurs.

## **COOL the burn under cool running water for 20 minutes.**

The longer a burn is left untreated, the deeper and more serious it can become. It is therefore vital that cooling the burn area is the critical first step in burn first aid management. If the burn surface area is large, the body may lose heat due to the skin losing its ability to regulate normal body temperature. Children can become cold very quickly if the burn is large. At any sign of shivering or shock, the patient should lay down and be loosely covered to keep warm.

## **COVER the burn area with a clean lint free cloth or cover loosely with cling wrap.**

Many burn complications arise as secondary conditions to the burn itself, and are commonly related to shock, toxicity to the area or local infection of the wound and surrounding tissue. To reduce the likelihood of infection and to assist the body in retaining body warmth, it is advised to cover the burn injury loosely with a plastic wrap or clean, lint free cloth.

## **SEEK medical advice**

If the burn area is larger than a 20c coin OR on the face, hands, feet, groin area, in skin folds or if there is potential damage to the lungs and throat seek immediate medical attention.

# Burn Classifications

## **Scald Burn**

A scald is a burn caused by contact with hot liquid or steam. An example of a scald burn may be when a child pulls down a cup from a table or bench or in the throat through drinking milk or drinks which are too hot.

## **Friction Burn**

Friction burns are caused by an aggressive moving contact with any hard or rough surface such as treadmills, roads, carpets or other floor surfaces. Injuries caused by friction are usually both an abrasion and a heat burn and generally happen through a fall or vehicle accident.

## **Contact/Thermal Burns**

Contact burns happen when the skin comes into contact with hot or extremely cold materials or environments. Often these burns occur with the use of household appliances and fixtures during routine activities of daily life, such as vehicle exhausts, ovens, heaters and hair straighteners.

## **Chemical and Acid Burns**

Most chemicals that cause burns are wither strong acids or bases – which can include bleach, drain/toilet cleaners, metal cleaners, concrete mix and pool chlorinators. Chemical burns can be deceiving and many may take several hours to begin the chemical reaction with your skin.

It is vital that any contact with these chemicals is quickly followed by removing any powders from the skin and thoroughly washing the affected skin for at least 20 minutes.

Symptoms may include redness, irritation or burning at the site of contact, feeling of numbness or blistering at the site of exposure, a cough or shortness of breath, muscle twitching and headaches.

## **Radiation (Sunburn)**

In Australia, sunburn can occur in less than 15 minutes on a clear summer day during the most intense UV time of between 10am–2pm.

Symptoms include reddening of the skin, localised pain and possibly blisters. Skin often turns red within 2–6 hours of being burnt and will continue to develop over the next 24–72 hours.

For severe sunburn, other symptoms may include dizziness, nausea or headaches. Suggested first aid includes keeping area out of sun to avoid further damage, cool the skin through cool showers and drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

# Burn Classifications – Continued

## **Fire and Flame Burns**

A flame burn occurs when the skin comes into contact with the heat of a flame. Generally, the heat from a flame is enough to warn us to avoid being injured, however as long as there are the essential elements of oxygen and fuel, fire will be sustained and unpredictable and we may not have the ability to avoid being injured. Teaching children – ‘Stop, Cover, Drop and Roll’ is important.

**Stop** – Stopping any quick movements restricts the flow of air around the flame.

**Cover** – Use your hands to cover your face and neck.

**Drop** – Drop to the ground.

**Roll** – Roll backwards and forwards in a rocking motion will restrict airflow and will help to ‘stamp out’ the fire.

## **Electrical Burns**

Electrical currents flowing through the wires of household appliances produce an excess of friction and heat which can be unpredictable in certain circumstances. If power points are overloaded, the additional heat can cause sparks or start a fire.

If the cord of an appliance is frayed or damaged, the electrical current can leak into the surrounding atmosphere. If the atmospheric conditions are conducive i.e damp or humid, it is possible for the electricity from a frayed cord to arc through the air and pass through the human body or fuel source as the shortest and easiest route to reach the earth, resulting in fire or electrocution.

First aid for an electrical burn is consistent with all burns first aid, however, medical assistance must always be sought as there may be little or no evidence of internal damage.



### **PREVENT**

Take action to prevent burns and scalds to yourself and others.



### **REMOVE**

Remove yourself from danger and remove any clothing or jewellery.



### **COOL**

Place the burn under cool, gently running water for 20 minutes.



### **COVER**

Cover the burn with a clean dressing.



### **SEEK**

Seek medical attention if the burn is on the face, hands, lap or feet, bigger than 20 cent piece or blistered.

# Guide: Memory Game

**Age:**  
Middle School

**Objective:**  
Children will become familiar with safe and unsafe scenarios.

**Task:**  
For students to match up the pairs.

**How to play:**

- Each player takes turns to select two cards.
- If the cards match, the player keeps them.
- If they do not match, the player puts the cards back face down.
- The game continues until all of the cards have been matched.

**Support Student Learning**

- When the game is being played, encourage the students to watch carefully which cards other players pick up and where they put them down.
- Discuss with the students the pictures on the cards and how they relate to safe and unsafe practices, hot items around the home and burns and scalds first aid.
- These cards can also be used for 'Go Fish' or 'Snap' type games.



## Picture Discussion Points



The importance of using oven gloves when taking things out/putting things in the oven.



Discuss why we should follow these steps when we are out in the sun.



To stop children from getting too close and touching the heater or fire.



Why we use rocks around the fire (to contain it). Always put out a camp-fire with water - never use dirt or sand. Dirt/sand can extinguish the flames but can stay hot for many hours and can burn feet and hands.



It can be hot or cold and you don't know by just looking at it. Make sure we don't touch it. It should be kept well out of reach of children and cords should be out of reach of young children so they don't pull it down.

# Guide: Memory Game

## Picture Discussion Points



Same as above. Some can reach up to 200 degrees Celsius.



These are dangerous and should be kept out of reach of children.



Hot drinks like coffee, tea, hot chocolate are a big cause of burns to children. These should be kept out of reach and adults should never hold children whilst holding a hot drink.



They stay very hot in the cup for a long time. Ensure the hot water is removed before serving to children and the noodles have cooled down. The best place to eat any hot food is at the table.



If someone receives a burn or scalds, immediately call 000 for help. Then do burns and scalds first aid (20 minutes of cool running water).



Cool running water is the ONLY thing we want to be putting on a burn. Do this immediately after receiving a burn. It is important to cool the area for 20 minutes to ensure heat is being removed from the burn.



Kettles can contain extremely hot water and can give a serious burn. These should be kept out of reach and should be pushed towards the back of the bench. Any cords should be put away and kept out of reach.



NEVER use any oils, creams, ice, toothpaste, or butter on a burn. They can make the burn worse and prevent healing. Only put 20 minutes of cool running water on the burn.



Hot water and hot food on the stove can give a serious burn if pulled down and spilled onto a child. Ensure any hot pots on the stove are placed towards the back of the stove and handles are facing away from the edge.

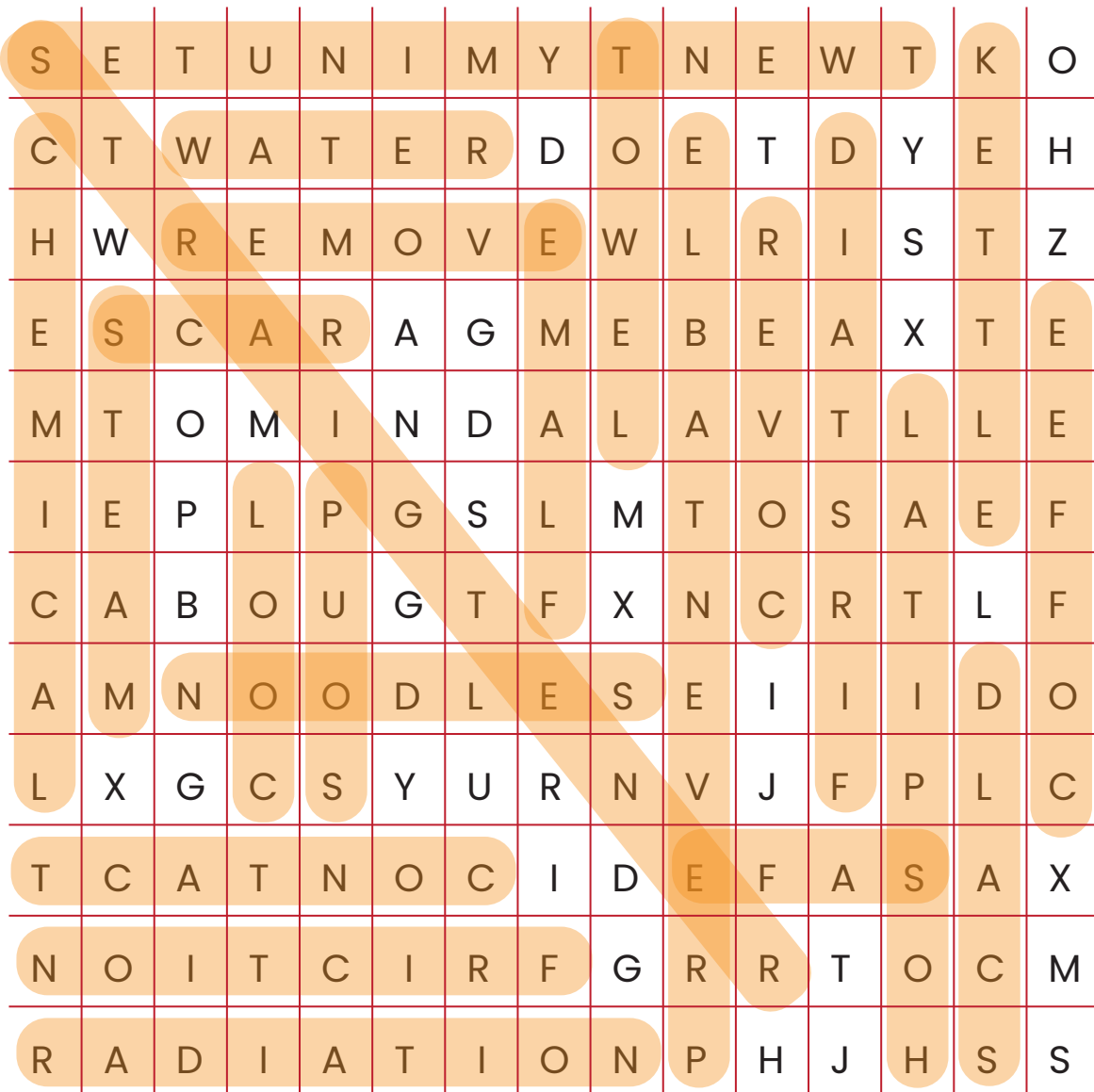


BBQs can get very hot and children are the perfect height to reach up and accidentally touch the hot plate. Ensure children are supervised and stay away from BBQs while they are on, to avoid injury.



Candles can be dangerous if left unattended and if children are left unattended around them. Ensure children are supervised at all times and candles are kept out of reach of young children.

# Guide: Watch out for Burns Word Search



COOL

TOWEL

TWENTY MINUTES

STRAIGHTENER

CHEMICAL

WATER

SOUP

FIRST AID

HOSPITAL

REMOVE

FLAME

KETTLE

SAFE

FRICTION

SCAR

PREVENTABLE

NOODLES

CONTACT

FIRE

RADIATION

COVER

SCALD

STEAM

COFFEE

# Watch out for Burns Word Search



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COVER

SCALD

STEAM

COFFEE

# Guide: Making Safe Choices

**Age:**

Upper Primary

**Objective:**

Children will understand the aspects they need to consider when thinking about risk taking behaviours.

**Task:**

Students to watch Burns Animation and discuss as a class, then complete the two 'Making Safer Choices' scenario worksheets.

**Video can be accessed here:**

- Preventing Burns and Scalds in Children <https://youtu.be/82npFu8ue-Q>
- Burns Safety: Burns First Aid <https://youtu.be/L3efWoh-yIE>

**Support Student Learning**

- Encourage students to think about the choices they would make and why.
- Get students thinking and discussing with others the consequences of the risk-taking behaviour referenced in the videos.
- The students can think about their home/school environment - where do they eat hot food? Is it safe? If not - what can they do to make it safer? Do they have younger siblings at home that may be at risk?

# Making Safe Choices — Hot Noodles

**Scenario:**

A seven year old girl is heating up two-minute noodles for lunch in the microwave. Her dad is outside. The microwave is on a high bench in the kitchen which she can only just reach.

When the microwave beeps, she rushes to take the two-minute noodles out and loses grip of the bowl, which causes the noodles to spill out of the bowl onto her.

She gets a burn on her arm from the hot noodles and runs outside to show her dad.

**What could be done to prevent the burn from happening?**

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**What first aid steps need to be taken in this situation?**

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# Making Safe Choices — Filling up the bath

**Scenario:**

Mum is filling up the bath for her three year old son. The phone rings and mum leaves the room for a moment to answer it, while the little boy stays in the bathroom.

The little boy decides to help with filling up the bath and starts turning the taps, accidentally turning the cold tap off.

He puts his hand underneath the running water to check the temperature and it is very hot, causing a burn to his hand. He screams and mum comes rushing in.

**What could be done to prevent the burn from happening?**

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**What first aid steps need to be taken in this situation?**

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