

Prevention of Open wood fire/ Wood heater burns

Factsheet

- Open wood fires and wood heaters are a common and often cheap source of heating particularly during the winter months.
- Burns from wood fires can occur from either direct contact with flame (flame burn), contact with heated glass or metal (contact burn) or from sitting too close to the fire (radiant burn). These types of burns are more prevalent in colder months and can occur in both adults and children*
- Some parents allow children to use the fire/heater to assist with standing or walking during hotter months. Unfortunately children may not know when the fire is lit and may sustain severe burns to their hands which can be painful and may need surgery.

*Data obtained from Burns Registry of Australia and New Zealand (BRANZ) 2020



- ✓ Do use a fixed fire screen for all open wood fires and wood heaters
- ✓ Do clean and maintain chimneys and heater flues yearly
- ✓ Do supervise children at all times when around an open fire or wood heater
- ✓ Do keep clothing at least 2 metres from fire/heater



- ✗ Do not place clothing on or too close to the fire/heater
- ✗ Do not allow children to assist with lighting or maintaining a fire
- ✗ Do not use accelerants to light fires or place inside a wood heater to light
- ✗ Do not leave your heater door open or remove screen to open fire
- ✗ Do not sit too close to an open fire or wood heater
- ✗ Do not allow children to play around fire/heater even when it is not in use



First Aid for Burns

If you, or someone you know is burnt, take the following actions:

1. Remove clothing and jewellery
2. Apply cool running water to the burn for **20 minutes** (effective up to 3 hours after injury)

Spraying water or alternating wet cloths can help if limited water
If no water available a hydrogel burn first aid dressing can be used until water available. Caution use on large %TBSA due to hypothermia

Do NOT use ice, butter, creams or alternatives

3. Cover burn with clean cloth and keep the patient warm
4. Seek medical attention for any burn bigger than 3cm; or with blisters; or if any other concerns