

Prevention of Childhood Bathroom Scalds

Factsheet



ANZBA

Australian & New Zealand Burn Association

Care • Prevention • Research • Education

- Bathrooms are dangerous places for children. There is the risk of scald, falls and drowning.
- A child's skin is thin and a full thickness burn can occur within seconds.
- Scalds occur when the bath temperature is too hot, when the child falls in before the bath is ready for use, or when another child turns on the hot tap.
- Tap water scalds are the eighth most common type of burns in children*.

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



- ✓ Do set your hot water system to no higher than 50 degrees, preferably lower, this can be done with a tempering valve.
- ✓ Do always run cold water in first and bring up to 37 degrees with the hot water
- ✓ Do test the temperature of the water with a thermometer before placing your child in. A temperature of 37 degrees is recommended. The same as the temperature of your hand.
- ✓ Do stay within arm's reach of your child when they are in the bath
- ✓ Do ignore the telephone or doorbell if your child is in the bath, or take them with you, taking care to keep them warm in a towel.
- ✓ Do keep the bathroom door closed when not in use.

✗ Do not bath your child in a sink if you have lever taps. These are easy for you or your child to knock on accidentally.



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

For more information go to www.anzba.org.au