



# Scald Injury Prevention

Adapted from a presentation developed by  
**American Burn Association**  
**Burn Prevention Committee**



# Burn Injury Statistics

- **National Statistics**
  - 4,000 deaths per year from burns and scalds
  - 25,000 hospitalized in burn center
  - 600,000 burn injuries treated in emergency departments
- **Children's National Statistics (June 2008 – June 2009)**
  - 860 children treated for burns
  - 660 children treated for burns in the emergency department
  - 260 children admitted for injuries related to burns
  - 680 children treated for burns in the outpatient clinic



## What is a scald injury

**A scald injury occurs when...**

- **contact with liquid or steam**
- **damages one or more layer of skin**



# Scald Prevention

- **What are the sources of scald injuries?**
- **Who are the most frequent victims?**
- **How can scald injuries be prevented?**
- **What are the appropriate first aid responses?**



# Frequent Scald Burn Sources

- Hot tap water
- Hot beverages
- Hot food
- Steam





## Most frequent scald burn victims

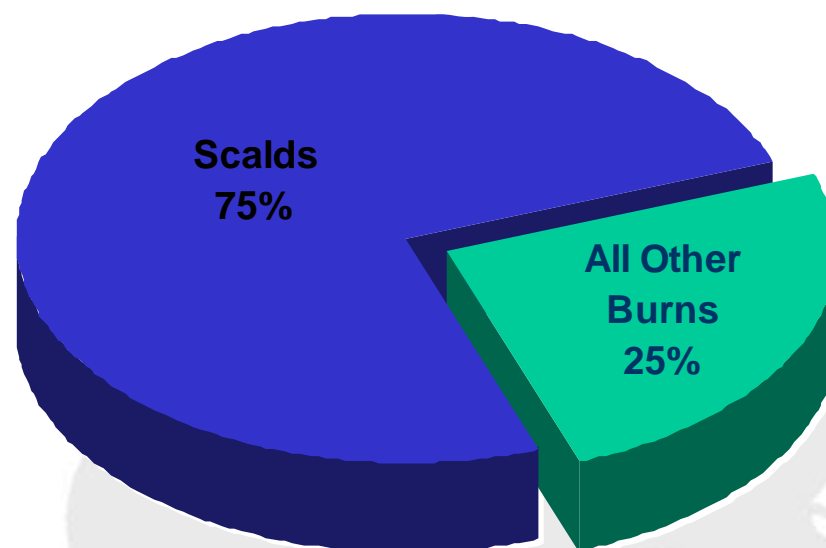
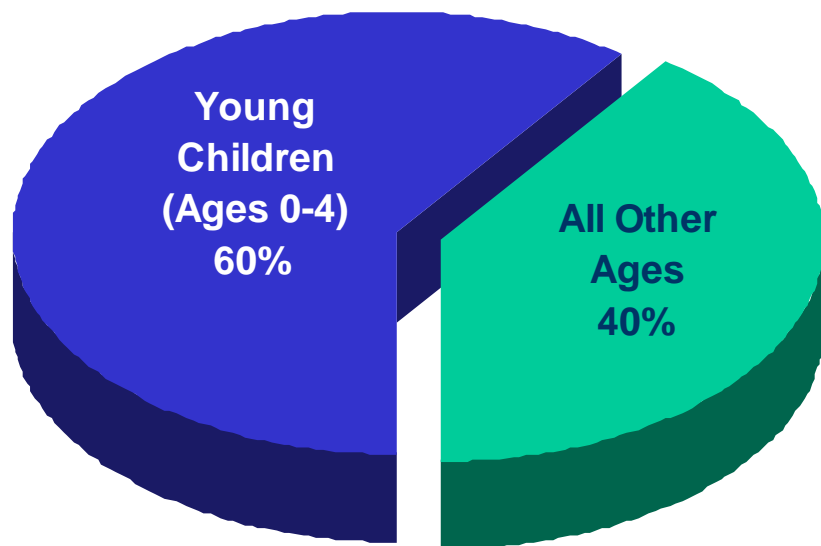
- **Young children**
- **Older adults**
- **People with disabilities**





# Scald burns to young children

**75% of all burns to young children are scalds**



*(Source: National Center for Health Statistics)*



## Young Children and Scald Injuries

- **Curiosity, imitation**
- **Limited understanding of danger**
- **Limited ability to react quickly to hot contact**
- **Thin skin = deeper burn**



# Common Sites of Scald Injury

- **Kitchen or dining area**
  - Spills while handling or moving hot foods and liquids, often involving children
- **Bathing area**
  - Inability to remove self from hot water



# Scald Injury Severity Factors

- **Length of contact with hot substance**
- **Temperature of substance**
- **Nature of substance**
  - Is it thick or sticky?
  - Does it retain heat?
- **Extent of body area scalded**
- **Location of scald**



# Protecting Children From Scalds

- **Household changes**
- **Everyday precautions**
- **Child supervision**





# Protecting Children from Scalds: Kitchen and Dining Areas

## Household modifications

- Mark and explain a “kid-free zone”
- Put away tablecloths
- Use spill-resistant “travel mugs”



# Protecting Children from Scalds: Kitchen and Dining Areas

## Everyday preparations

- **Keep friends, relatives, and sitters informed**
- **Turn pan handles away from stove front**
- **Observe safe microwave oven practices**
- **Protect electric cooking appliances and cords**



# Protecting Children from Scalds: Kitchen and Dining Areas

## Scald-safe child supervision

- Supervise young children at all times
- Encourage use of “kid-safe” zone
- Never hold a child in your arm:
  - While preparing or serving hot food
  - While drinking a hot beverage
- Keep hot food and liquids high and out of the reach of young children



# Protecting Children and Adults from Scalds: Bathing Areas

## Household Modifications

- Establish safe hot water temperature
- If this is not possible, install tempering valve or safe faucet and shower heads
- Install non-slip bath, shower mats
- Install grab bar in shower stall



## Maximum Water Temperature Standards

- **Recommended maximum residential standard**  
**120°F (48°C)**  
(U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission)
- **Nursing homes and child care facilities**  
**110°F (43°C)**  
(Recommended and by some state or local regulations)



## Measuring Hot Water Temperature

- **Run hot water up to two minutes at tap**
- **Test temperature with cooking thermometer**





## Bathroom Scald Prevention - Behaviors

- **Check water temperature before placing child in tub or shower**
- **Instruct carefully any older siblings who help bathe young children**
- **Young children should never be left alone in the tub**



# Emergency Care of Scald Injury

- **Remove scald victim from source**
- **Remove all affected clothing, diapers, shoes, etc.**
- **Cool scalded area briefly with cool water**
- **Cover with clean, dry covering**
- **Do not apply creams, salves or ointments**
- **Call 9-1-1**



## Scald Prevention – Some Important Points

- Limited mobility and thin skin increase risk and severity for the young and old
- Keep young children away when cooking, or when drinking hot beverages
- Test hot water temperature and establish thermostat setting at or below 120°F/48°C