

Bathroom Scalds: Hot Water Burns Like Fire

Mechanism of Injury:

Most are caused by the child or caregiver turning on the hot water tap whilst the child is in the bath.

Data:

In the six years from 1997 to 2002, 1633 children were treated for burns at the Royal Children's Hospital.

- 6% of all burns were from bathroom scalds
- Average age: 14 months
- Male : Female = 2:1
- 75% were supervised by an adult
- Area of body most affected: Legs and feet
- 20% required skin grafting

Prevention Message:

- Small children should not be left unsupervised in the bathroom
- A hot water regulator, limiting the maximum temperature to 50°C in all bathrooms would decrease the incidence of burns
- The cold water tap should always be turned on first and off last
- Do not fill a bath directly from a recently boiled kettle
- An adult should test the water with their wrist before letting a child in the bath
- Child-proof safety covers for the hot tap can be used



PREVENTION



**Child-proof safety cover on
the hot tap**

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