

Electrical Burns: Don't Shock The Children!

Mechanism of Injury:

Electrical burns in children are caused by:

- touching electrical cords
- touching faulty electrical appliances
- insertion of foreign objects into the electric wall outlet

Most of these burns occur in the family home.

Data:

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

- 2% of all burns were from electricity
- Average age: 6 years
- Male : Female = 4:1
- 74% were supervised by an adult
- Area of body most affected: hands
- 61% required skin grafting
- 21% required surgery later in life for chronic scarring

Prevention Message:

- Keep electrical cords out of a child's reach
- Unplug cords and keep plastic plug-in covers on all electrical outlets that are not in use
- Perform regular checks on all cords on electrical appliances and lamps
- Replace any electrical appliances where the cord is frayed
- Have electrical appliances repaired by a professional
- The use of safety switches in the home can also reduce all types of electrical burns as they shut off electricity in 1/30 of a second



PREVENTION



Socket covers can be used
to make electrical outlets safe

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