The emergency services are not the only ones who can make a difference with burns injuries. You can prevent further injury and reduce scarring by delivering immediate and appropriate first aid. The following information provides the do's and don'ts for burns first aid.

**STOP**

**DO:**
- Maintain personal safety
- Isolate/turn off electrical source
- Stop the burning process
- If on fire, extinguish by wrapping in blanket or STOP where you are
- DROP to the ground and cover your eyes and mouth with your hands
- ROLL over and back and forth until the flames are out
- Avoid getting chemicals on any other areas of skin or on yourself

**DON’T:**
- Pull clothing or jewellery off if it is stuck to the skin or hard to remove without causing pain

**COOL**

**DO:**
- Cool the burn area with cool running water for 20 minutes, e.g. shower
- If running water is unavailable, use a cool compress or a wet towel, changed every 3-5 minutes for a total of 20 minutes
- Keep the rest of the patient warm whilst cooling the burn and especially after cooling

**DON’T:**
- Use ice or ice packs as this can deepen the burn

**REMOVE**

**DO:**
- Remove loose clothing if it is contaminated or near the burn area
- Remove nappies on babies and infants if contaminated or near the burn area
- Remove jewellery and contact lenses if near or on any burn areas

**DON’T:**
- Pull clothing or jewellery off if it is stuck to the skin or hard to remove without causing pain

**COVER**

**DO:**
- Cover the burn loosely with cling film after cooling
- If cling film is unavailable cover the burn with a clean non-fluffy cloth or a plastic bag

**DON’T:**
- Apply toothpaste, ice, butter, creams, oils, cotton wool, turmeric, eggs, aloe vera or yoghurt
- Apply anything other than cling film or a clean cloth

**CALL**

**DO:**
- Seek medical advice over the phone by calling 111 or your local GP surgery if your burn is:
  - bigger than a fifty pence piece
  - on the hands, feet, face or groin
  - over a joint
  - on vulnerable persons such as children or the elderly
- Dial 999 in an emergency

**DON’T:**
- Delay seeking help if you have any concerns or doubts about your burn injury
Burns can’t always be avoided, however, there are measures that can be taken to prevent them. Help protect yourself and your family by following these simple steps below.

**Sun**

- SLIP on a t-shirt
- SLOP on a high factor sun block
- SLAP on a sunhat

**Hot appliances**

- keep hot appliances out of the reach of children
- check hair straighteners and irons are cooling somewhere safe
- keep children away from plug socket outlets until they are capable of understanding the risks and are able to use them safely
- check appliance cables are out of reach of children
- keep secure fire guard screens in front of open fires, log burners, heaters and radiators

**Fires**

- keep candles, matches and lighters out of the sight and reach of children and never leave a room empty with lit candles burning
- have a smoke alarm fitted on each level of your home and check regularly that it is working
- make a plan of how you and your family would escape if there was a fire and practise it
- be careful near flames as some materials are more flammable than others, particularly fancy dress

**Scalds**

- always run cold water first into the bath or sink and then add the hot water
- check the temperature with your elbow or a thermometer
- ensure kettles and hot pans are out of the reach of children in the kitchen, with handles turned away from the edge
- put all hot drinks out of the reach of children
- do not drink hot drinks with a baby in your lap and don’t pass drinks over them
- don’t balance hot drinks or basins of hot water between your legs, even as a temporary measure

**Further information and support**

**NHS Choices** have advice on how to childproof your home: [http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Burns-and-scalds/Pages/Prevention.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Burns-and-scalds/Pages/Prevention.aspx)

Some useful information on initial burn management and care of healing burns can be found via **London and South East of England Burn Network**:

[www.lsebn.nhs.uk](http://www.lsebn.nhs.uk)

Several charities have been set up to assist those with burns and can be found via the following web sites:

- **Changing Faces**
  [www.changingfaces.org.uk](http://www.changingfaces.org.uk)

- **Children’s Burns Trust**
  [www.cbtrust.org.uk](http://www.cbtrust.org.uk)

- **Dan’s Fund for Burns**
  [www.dansfundforburns.org](http://www.dansfundforburns.org)

[www.lsebn.nhs.uk](http://www.lsebn.nhs.uk)  
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