



Summer Safety: Burn Prevention



 **New York-Presbyterian**
 Weill Cornell Medical Center



Burns, Fire and the Summer Season:

- Each year, approximately 10,000 Americans get hurt or burned from fireworks. Almost half of those injured are kids.
- Barbeques cause thousands of fires per year in the U.S., injuring many and causing serious damage.
- Sunburns significantly increase the risk for skin cancer.
- Lightning causes up to 1,000 injuries and 100 deaths per year in the U.S.



As summer approaches, we start planning for trips to the beach, barbeques, campfires, fireworks, and other outdoor activities. While fun, these activities can also lead to burn injuries. Here are some ways to stay safe and prevent burns as you enjoy the summer.

FIREWORKS

All fireworks and sparklers are dangerous and can lead to serious burn injuries. In many areas, including New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, the buying, selling, and use of fireworks and sparklers are illegal. Before using these, check with your local police and follow these safety tips:

- Keep children away from all fireworks.
- Teach children that fireworks are NOT toys, and that they should never pick up or touch any fireworks.
- Never hold a child while handling fireworks.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while using fireworks.
- Light and use one sparkler at a time. When finished using them, place sparklers into a bucket of cool water before disposing of them.
- Avoid running with, handing-off, throwing, or kicking fireworks or sparklers.
- Always wear closed-toe shoes when handling any fireworks.
- Use sparklers outside and with adult supervision.
- Point and hold all sparklers and fireworks away from your head and body.



BARBEQUES

Using a barbeque (BBQ) can lead to serious burns and fires. Follow these simple tips to keep you and your family safe:

- Keep matches and lighters away from and out of the reach of children.
- Always keep children away from the grill.
- Before using your grill, make sure all of the parts—including the gas tank—are in good condition. If you notice any leaks, cracks, or breaks, replace the parts before using.
- Open the grill cover and light the match before turning on the gas.
- If using a starter fluid, choose one that is made specifically for grilling, and apply to coals before lighting.
- Avoid using gasoline or kerosene to start a BBQ or make the fire bigger.
- When finished using a charcoal grill, allow the coals to cool before pouring on water. Once cool, dispose of used coals into a metal container and avoid burying them in the ground.
- Always use a BBQ grill outdoors, away from any structures, and in areas clear of clutter and flammable objects.
- Keep a fire extinguisher close to the grill for emergency use.
- Wear short sleeves or tight-fitting clothes and tie back long hair while cooking near an open flame.
- Use an insulated, fire retardant barbeque mitt and BBQ tools with long handles.
- Store propane tanks in a well-ventilated, protected area away from any dwelling.



OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Spending time outdoors can be fun and exciting, but safety should always be a part of your plans. Here are some ways to stay safe and prevent burn injuries while enjoying the sun, sand, park, or backyard:

- Always apply sunscreen to the skin at least 30 minutes before going outdoors. Reapply every 1-2 hours and after swimming, sweating, or exercising—even on cloudy days.
- Choose a sunscreen that protects from ultraviolet A (UVA) and B (UVB) sunlight, is water resistant, and rated with an SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or higher.
- Check with your doctor before putting sunscreen on babies less than 6 months of age or children with sensitive skin.
- When outdoors, wear sunglasses (with UV protection), a hat and a long sleeve t-shirt and pants when possible.
- Stay out of the sun between 10am – 4pm when the sun is the strongest.
- Build campfires in designated fire pits and never leave them unattended.
- Supervise children around a campfire and make a 5-foot “child-free” safety zone around the fire pit.
- Keep tiki torches and citronella candles away from fabric, paper, chemicals, and out of the reach of young children.
- Always wear shoes when outside as streets, sand, and playground surfaces can get extremely hot.
- During a lightning storm, avoid high ground, water, open spaces, and metal objects (such as golf clubs, umbrellas, fences, and tools). Find shelter immediately.
- If your vehicle overheats, remove the radiator cap only after the engine has cooled.



The William Randolph Hearst Burn Center at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center is one of the largest and busiest burn centers in the nation. We treat nearly 5,000 patients—one-third of whom are kids—each year.

By providing all phases of treatment—from the emergency response to rehabilitation—to patients and families who have suffered a burn injury, the Burn Center provides the expertise, resources, and continuity of care needed to get the best results.

To make an appointment to see a doctor or if you would like to learn more about burn prevention, please call the Hearst Burn Center at NewYork-Presbyterian/Weill Cornell Medical Center:

Main Office/Appointments: (212) 746 – 5410

Burn Outreach/Education: (212) 746 – 5417

**William Randolph Hearst Burn Center at
NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital**

525 East 68th Street, L706, New York, NY 10065

<http://nyp.org/services/burn-center.html>

If you or your family member gets burned, call 911 and seek immediate medical attention!

This information is brief and general. It should not be the only source of your information on this health care topic. It is not to be used or relied upon for diagnosis or treatment. It does not take the place of instructions from your doctor. Talk to your health care providers before making a health care decision.

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