

Hot water bottle safety: Preventing burns and scalds

Doctors and nurses across the UK are urging us to use hot water bottles correctly as they can cause serious burns.

How to fill your hot water bottle safely

- Follow the instructions on the bottle
- Allow the boiled water to cool for a few minutes before filling – Freshly boiled water can damage the seams of the bottle and cause it to split
- Don't fill more than two thirds of its capacity
- Carefully let out the air from the bottle before putting the stopper on
- Make sure the stopper is screwed on tightly

Using your hot water bottle safely

- Lullaby Trust advises never putting a hot water bottle in your baby's sleep space as they can overheat
- Remind older children not to sit or lie on hot water bottles
- Never put a hot water bottle directly on your skin, use a cover

Do hot water bottles expire?

Yes, they do. Rubber deteriorates over time so old hot water bottles can break and cause serious burns. It is advised to regularly check for signs of wear and tear and not use hot water bottles that are more than two years old.

This flower symbol, found on hot water bottles, indicates exactly when it was made.



The number in the middle is the year it was made, the flower segments represent the 12 months of the year and the dots inside those represent the number of weeks. So this hot water bottle was made in April 2021.



What to do in an emergency

Remember: COOL, CALL, COVER

- COOL the burn for 20 minutes under cool running water.
- CALL for help
- COVER the burn loosely with cling film

[Learn more about first aid for burn injuries](#)

Related pages

Preventing burns and scalds

Most childhood burns and scalds happen at home. Here we've highlighted some of the key dangers in and around the home.

Safe from burns fact sheet

Download our free safe from burns fact sheet for more top tips on how to prevent burns and scald injuries.


LEARN: Burns first aid

Knowing what to do if your child suffers a burn can mean the difference between lifelong scarring and a child who heals well.



WATCH: Instagram live replay

We teamed up with The Children's Burns Trust to deliver an Instagram Live on burns prevention and first aid. Watch the replay here.



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