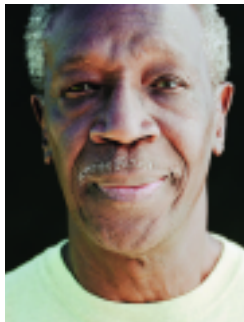


Burn Safety Tips for Senior Adults

The three leading causes of fire deaths and injuries are: **Smoking, Heating, Cooking**



- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home and outside each sleeping area. Test smoke alarms regularly each month.
- Develop a realistic escape plan with two ways out of every room. Have a designated meeting place that is a safe distance from the house. Keep all exits clear.
- Hot water heaters should be set at 120 degrees Fahrenheit (F) or lower.
- Cook on back burners when possible.
- Keep all pot handles turned back, away from edge.
- All appliance cords need to be kept coiled and away from counter edges.
- When frying foods, keep appropriate size lid nearby. If fire occurs, slide lid onto the frying pan to smother the fire. NEVER carry flaming pan to sink or outside.
- Insist on no smoking in your home. Misuse of smoking materials is the number one cause of fatal home fires for older adults.
- Never smoke near an oxygen source.
- Never smoke where you sleep.
- If you use oxygen, stay at least five feet away from flame sources such as gas stoves, candles, lighted fireplaces or any other heat source.
- If you use oxygen, clearly identify that oxygen is in use by placing sign on your front door. Do not smoke or allow others to smoke in your home.
- Check electric blankets for cracks or breaks in wiring, plugs and connectors.
- If you use an electric heating pad, use a timer switch so it will shut off automatically or choose a product with a built-in sensor and automatic shut-off feature.
- Keep all combustibles, such as clothes, curtains and paper, at least three feet away from space heaters, fireplaces, candles and any other sources of fire or flame.
- Place safety decal (available from local fire department) on bedroom window. This decal aids them in rescue efforts.

Characteristics of Burns

First Degree

- Minor damage to the skin
- Color – pink to red
- Painful
- Skin is dry without blisters

Second Degree

- Skin is moist, wet and weepy
- Blisters are present
- Color – bright pink to cherry red
- Lots of swelling or accumulation of fluid
- Very painful

Third Degree

- Skin may be very bright red or dry and leathery, charred, waxy white, tan or brown
- Burned veins may be visible
- Area is insensate – the person is unable to feel touch in areas of full thickness injury



Vanderbilt Burn Center

www.vuburncenter.com

Information from the American Burn Association website.