

Basic First Aid for Cuts and Lacerations

Call 911 if:

- A cut is bleeding severely
- Blood is spurting out
- Bleeding can't be stopped after 10 minutes of firm and steady pressure

In general, a cut that needs stitches should be repaired within 6 hours of the injury. The exception is cuts to the face and scalp, which generally can be repaired up to 24 hours after the injury.

Take the following steps for minor cuts.

1. Stop the Bleeding

- Apply direct pressure on the area.

2. Clean and Protect

- Clean the area with warm water and gentle soap.
- Apply an antibiotic ointment to reduce chance of infection.
- Put a sterile bandage on the area. In some people, antibiotic ointments may cause a rash. If this happens, stop using the ointment.

3. Call a health care provider if:

- The cut is deep or over a joint
- You cannot get the cut or laceration clean
- The injury is a deep puncture wound or the person has not had a recent (within the last 5 to 10 years) tetanus shot or booster
- The cut is from a human or animal bite

4. Follow Up

- For a minor cut or laceration, remove bandage after a couple of days to promote healing.
- See a health care provider if the cut doesn't heal or shows signs of infection, including redness, swelling, pus, or excessive pain.

Burns - Home Treatment

Most minor burns will heal on their own, and home treatment is usually all that is needed to relieve your symptoms and promote healing. But if you suspect you may have a more severe injury, use first-aid measures while you arrange for an evaluation by your doctor.

Immediate first aid for burns

First, stop the burning to prevent a more severe burn.

- Heat burns (thermal burns): Smother any flames by covering them with a blanket or water. If your clothing catches fire, do not run: **stop, drop, and roll** on the ground to smother the flames.
- Liquid scald burns (thermal burns): Run cool tap water over the burn for 10 to 20 minutes. Do not use ice.
- Electrical burns: After the person has been separated from the electrical source, check for breathing and a heartbeat. Call 911.
- Chemical burns: Natural foods such as chili peppers, which contain a substance irritating to the skin, can cause a burning sensation. When a chemical burn occurs, find out what chemical caused the burn. Call your local **Poison Control Center** or the **National Poison Control Hotline (1-800-222-1222)** for more information about how to treat the burn.
- Tar or hot plastic burns: Immediately run cold water over the hot tar or hot plastic to cool the tar or plastic.
 - Next, look for other injuries. If you or the person who is burned was involved in an accident that caused the burn, other serious injuries may have occurred.
 - Remove any jewelry or clothing at the site of the burn. If clothing is stuck to the burn, do not remove it. Carefully cut around the stuck fabric to remove loose fabric. Remove all jewelry because it may be difficult to remove it later if swelling occurs.

Fire Prevention

More fires start in the kitchen than anywhere else in the home. There's a lot you can do to help fireproof your kitchen and reduce the chances of a fire starting from cooking. Stoves can cause fires, as can toasters, toaster ovens, and any electrical appliance that can overheat. Be sure to follow the instructions when using your appliances.

Here are some quick tips to help keep your kitchen a safe place.

- Don't store things on top of, in, or around your oven.
- Keep flammable things like dishtowels, paper bags, or cereal boxes, away from your stove. Don't use your oven as 'extra storage' for flammable things like paper or plastic bags, plastic containers, or dishtowels. Even if you don't turn the oven on, the pilot light can ignite objects inside.
- Turn pot handles toward the center of the stove when cooking on the stove top. Pots and handles should never hang over the edge of the stove where someone could bump into them. This is one of the major causes of serious burns in children and elderly people.
- Don't leave cooking unattended.
- It only takes a minute for a fire to get out of hand. Don't leave things cooking on the stovetop unattended and check regularly on the things cooking in the oven.
- Use caution when cooking and handling hot objects.
- Use pot holders (as opposed to rags, that may catch fire) when moving any hot object.
- Avoid wearing clothes with long, loose-fitting sleeves that may catch fire easily.
- Keep cooking appliances free of food crumbs and scraps.
- Clean your stove top, oven and toaster regularly to prevent leftover pieces of food from catching on fire. But remember, use caution when cleaning your appliances -- unplug any electrical appliances and follow the cleaning instructions closely to avoid electrocution.
- Keep electrical appliances away from water and fire.
- Try to plug in your appliances and keep electrical cords as far away as possible from water hazards, like the sink, or fire hazards, like the stove top.
- Use your stove only as directed.
- If you have a gas stove and smell gas (beyond a burnt-out pilot light), turn off all burners, open windows for better ventilation and call your gas company. Be cautious when relighting pilot lights: make sure the room is well ventilated and use long-stemmed matches or lighters. Never use your stove (electric or gas) to heat the room.

How to Put Out Kitchen Fires

When a fire starts in the kitchen, you need to act fast to keep the fire from getting out of control. But how you act depends on what kind of fire you have and where it is. Follow these instructions for putting out kitchen fires:

- If your clothing catches fire, **STOP, DROP AND ROLL!**
- If you have a fire in the oven or the microwave, close the door or keep it closed, and turn off the oven. Don't open the door! The lack of oxygen will suffocate the flames.
- If your oven continues to smoke like a fire is still going on in there, call the fire department.
- If you have a fire in a cooking pan, use an oven mitt to clap on the lid, then move the pan off the burner, and turn off the stove. The lack of oxygen will stop the flames in a pot.
- If you can't safely put the lid on a flaming pan or you don't have a lid for the pan, use your fire extinguisher. Aim at the *base* of the fire — not the flames.
- Never use water to put out electrical fires. Adding water to an electrical fire can cause electrocution.
- Never use water to put out grease fires! Water repels grease and can spread the fire by splattering the grease. Instead, try one of these methods:
 - If the fire is small, cover the pan with a lid and turn off the burner.
 - Throw lots of baking soda or salt on it. *Never* use flour, which can explode or make the fire worse.
 - Keep a box next to your stove to throw on stove top fires.
 - Smother the fire with a wet towel or other large wet cloth.
 - Use a fire extinguisher.
- Don't swat at a fire with a towel, apron, or other clothing. You're likely to fan the flames and spread the fire.
- If the fire is spreading and you can't control it, get everyone out of the house and call 911! Make sure everybody in your family knows how to get out of the house safely in case of a fire. Practice your fire escape route.

Slips, Trips, and Falls

Slips happen where there is too little friction or traction between the footwear and the walking surface. Common causes of slips are:

- wet or oily surfaces
- occasional spills
- loose, unanchored rugs or mats
- flooring or other walking surfaces that do not have same degree of traction in all areas

Trips happen when your foot collides (strikes, hits) an object causing you to lose the balance and, eventually fall. Common causes of tripping are:

- obstructed view
- poor lighting
- clutter in your way
- wrinkled carpeting
- uncovered cables
- bottom drawers not being closed
- uneven (steps, thresholds) walking surfaces

What can you do to avoid falling?

You can reduce the risk of slipping on wet flooring by:

- taking your time and paying attention to where you are going
- adjusting your stride to a pace that is suitable for the walking surface and the tasks you are doing
- walking with the feet pointed slightly outward
- making wide turns at corners

You can reduce the risk of tripping by:

- keeping walking areas clear from clutter or obstructions
- keeping flooring in good condition
- always using installed light sources that provide sufficient light for your tasks
- using a flashlight if you enter a dark room where there is no light
- ensuring that things you are carrying or pushing do not prevent you from seeing any obstructions, spills, etc.

Disinfection of Work Surfaces

If not cleaned properly, the kitchen could become a storehouse of germs and bacteria.

Cleaning is the process of removing food and other types of soil from a surface, such as a dish, glass, or cutting board. Cleaning is accomplished using a cleaning agent that removes food, soil, rust stains, minerals, or other deposits. The right cleaning agent must be selected because not all can be used on food-contact surfaces.

Sanitizing is the process of reducing the number of microorganisms that are on a properly cleaned surface to a safe level. Sanitizing is accomplished by using either heat, radiation, or chemicals. Unless the item to be sanitized is effectively cleaned, it is impossible to obtain close contact between the sanitizer and the surface to be sanitized.

How to properly disinfect work surfaces:

1. Wipe counters and the stovetop with dish detergent and water using a paper towel. Use a new paper towel and clean water to rinse away the soap. Allow the counters and the stove to dry.
2. Mix 1 tablespoon of bleach with 1 gallon of water. Pour some of the mixture in a spray bottle. Spray your kitchen surfaces with the bleach mixture and allow them to air dry. The bleach kills most household germs.
3. Wash cutting boards or any items that touch raw meat immediately with soap and hot water, then wash again with the bleach mixture. Juices from raw meats can cross-contaminate other food that touches the cutting boards or plates the meat was resting on.
4. Wipe up spills in the refrigerator promptly with a paper towel, dishwashing liquid and water.
5. Pour the bleach mixture into a bucket. Dip a mop into the bucket and scrub your floors to remove germs and bacteria that might have fallen off the counters as you prepared your food.
6. Wash your hands with soap and warm water thoroughly after cleaning your kitchen to remove any transferred germs.