



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Don't Get Burned*

*Nonfatal Scald-Related Burns Among Adults Aged  $\geq 65$  Years — United States, 2009–2006*

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*[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.*

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

As the U.S. population ages, the number of elderly living alone has increased substantially, and so has the incidence of injuries among this population. A recent CDC study found that one of the more common injuries among senior adults is scald burns.

Dr. Mef Galle is a physician with CDC's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. He's joining us today to discuss strategies for preventing scald burns among elderly persons. Welcome to the show, Mef.

[Dr. Galle] Thank you.

[Dr. Gaynes] Mef, how many older persons suffer scald burns each year?

[Dr. Galle] About 8,600 people suffer from scald burns each year.

[Dr. Gaynes] And in what age group do most of these injuries occur?

[Dr. Galle] Young elderly between the age[s] of 65 to 79 who are also very active are the ones who sustain scald burns more than the age group 80 and older.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the most common causes of scald burns among this population?

[Dr. Galle] The most common cause of scald burns are exposure to hot liquids and steam.

[Dr. Gaynes] So where in the home do most burn injuries occur?

[Dr. Galle] And most of the place[s] at home are [the] kitchen, dining table area, and as well as the bathroom.

[Dr. Gaynes] Mef, what precautions can a senior adult take to avoid suffering a burn injury?

[Dr. Galle] As most of the scald burns are occurring in the kitchen, during the preparation of food, use a rear burner when cooking, if possible. Place hot items in the center of the table in the dining area, and be sure that the microwave ovens are easily accessible and placed below the face level to prevent scald injuries.

[Dr. Gaynes] If a person does suffer a scald burn, how should they treat the injury?

[Dr. Galle] They have to remove any clothing on the top of the scald burn area; they have to use cold running water and clean the area, and put dry clothing or gauze and go to the emergency room for help.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about ways to prevent scald burns among this elderly group?

[Dr. Galle] They can call 1-800-CDC-INFO and ask for scald burns in [the] elderly.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Mef. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Mef Galle about ways to prevent scald burns among the elderly.

Remember, be careful when transferring hot liquids from stoves or microwaves, and if you suffer a scald burn, use running cold water over the burn, cover with clean cloth, and go to the emergency room.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.