

Don't get burned grilling, and other hot weather tips

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It's always a good idea to use caution when having some summer

fun—and that includes preventing burns from barbecues and other heat sources.

An expert from UT Southwestern Medical Center offers tips for avoiding heat-related pitfalls, including grilling and metal playground equipment during extreme outdoor temperatures.

"Concrete, metal and even [plastic surfaces](#) sitting in the sun are hot enough to burn, and children are particularly at risk," said [Dr. Samuel Mandell](#), associate professor of surgery at University of Texas Southwestern in Dallas.

Mandell, who spoke in a hospital news release, specializes in [burn care](#).

According to UT Southwestern, contact burns from hot surfaces result in about 70,000 [emergency room visits](#) a year in the United States.

And concrete is one surprising example, reaching 125 degrees when the air temperature is a far cooler 77 degrees.

Barbecue [grill](#) or stove accidents are also a common source of burn injuries. More than 10,700 people were treated in U.S. hospital emergency rooms each year between 2018 and 2022, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission National Electronic Injury Surveillance System.

"When grilling food outside, remember that grills—both gas and charcoal—are an open source of flame and a potential danger," said Mandell, who is also director of the Parkland Regional Burn Center in Dallas.

Some ways to be safe are to always wear shoes on hot concrete or asphalt, particularly if you have neuropathy.

Be aware of children and pets around sun-drenched surfaces, Mandell cautions. This includes concrete, toys, playground equipment and car seats.

If someone falls or collapses on hot pavement, check for burns on the skin.

Showing off that new grill and recipe? Mandell offers these important grilling safety tips:

- Never leave a lit grill unattended. Make sure to designate a 3-foot or greater area around the grill for children and pets to avoid. This can help prevent burns or accidentally knocking over the grill.
- Do not lean directly over the grill. Use caution with dangling clothing, such as scarves, shirttails and apron strings. Consider flame-retardant oven mitts and long utensils to avoid [burns](#).
- Do not use gasoline to start a fire in the grill.
- Don't pour water directly on hot coals, Mandell advised. The steam can rise unexpectedly and scald your skin.
- Smother grease fires with a lid or an appropriate fire extinguisher. This should always be kept near the grill.
- Make sure charcoal fluid is out of the reach of children and pets and away from any source of heat, including grills and fire pits.
- Do not try moving a hot grill. Wait for coals to cool before disposing of them.

It's also important to avoid toxic fumes from charcoal. Burning charcoal produces [carbon monoxide](#), which is a colorless and odorless gas. Never burn charcoal indoors or in garages, tents, RVs, campers or other enclosed spaces.

More information: The U.S. Fire Administration has more on [burn](#)

[prevention.](#)

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