

Kitchen Safety

It's a fact that kitchens, both commercial and domestic, are dangerous places. There is enormous potential for accidental injuries in every cooking venue. Kitchens are primary sites for non-fatal accidents. The predominant injuries occurring in kitchens are burns, cuts and falls.

Almost every cook has sustained a burn while preparing a meal. And though it is well known that pots cooking on the stove are hot, the lids are seldom considered. Placed innocently on the surface away from burners, they can absorb enough heat to produce a nasty burn, especially if placed over a pilot light. Pot handles, if not turned away from outer edges of the stove, can snag clothing or be grabbed by children, resulting in serious trauma if the contents contact the skin or splash in the eye. Even the sides of the stove itself can be a source for burn injuries.

The Kitchen Can Be A Dangerous Place

Cuts (and punctures) may be caused by a variety of kitchen objects. Knives carelessly left lying around, in a sink full of soapy dishwater, for instance, are an obvious hazard. Leaving such implements within reach of children can be disastrous. Oddly enough, more cuts are caused by using dull knives than sharp ones, because dull knives require more force to perform

tasks, thus increasing the probability for slippage and injury. Proper knife use demands sharp instruments and a stable cutting platform. Always use a good, substantial cutting board, and make certain it will not move during use. Be sure to properly store sharp instruments immediately after cleaning.

Trips and falls are as common in the home as elsewhere. In the kitchen they're usually caused by a spill. If spills are not cleaned up immediately, someone is sure not to notice, possibly with unfortunately results. For the same reason, never allow floor space to become cluttered with furniture, electrical cords or people. This is an invitation for disaster.

As with any other safety issue, a little common sense goes a long way toward preventing accidents in the kitchen, and prevention is always preferred to treating an injury.

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