

Island Home Medical

Fire Safety In Your Home

LEARN about E.D.I.T.H.

Exit Drills In the Home

In 1995, 3640 Americans died in home fires. That's roughly 10 people per day. Tens of thousands more were injured. People can survive even major fires in their homes if they are alerted to the fire and get out quickly and **STAY OUT**.

1. HOW TO SURVIVE A FIRE:

- ❖ **Install Smoke Detectors.** **WORKING SMOKE DETECTORS** can alert you to a fire in your home in time for you to escape, even if you are sleeping. Install smoke detectors on every level of your home, including the basement, and outside each sleeping area.
- ❖ More than half of all fatal home fires happen at night while people are asleep. Smoke detectors sound an alarm when a fire starts, waking people before they are trapped or overcome by smoke. With a working smoke detector your risk of dying in a home fire is cut in nearly half.

Test detectors every month, following the manufacturer's directions, and replace batteries at least once a year, or whenever a detector "chirps" to signal low battery power. Never "borrow" a smoke detector's battery for another use - a disabled detector can't save your life. Replace detectors that are more than 10 years old.

- ❖ **2. Plan Your Escape From Fire.** Once a fire has started, there is not time to plan how to get out. **IF A FIRE BREAKS OUT** in your home, you have to get out fast.

Prepare for a fire emergency by **sitting down with your family and agreeing on an escape plan**. Be sure that everyone knows at least two unobstructed exits - doors and windows - from every room. (If you live in an apartment building, do not include elevators in your escape plan.)

Draw a floor plan of your home/apartment marking two exits – especially out of sleeping areas.

Decide on a meeting place outside where everyone will meet after they escape. Have your entire household practice your escape plan at least twice a year.

Practice your escape plan at least twice a year. HAVE A FIRE DRILL IN YOUR HOME. A fire drill is NOT a race. Get out quickly but carefully.

Make sure everyone in your home can unlock doors and windows – even in the dark. Windows or doors with security bars need to be equipped with quick-release devices and everyone in the household should know how to use them

If you live in an apartment building, use stairways to escape. NEVER use an elevator during a fire. It may stop between floors or take you to a floor where the fire is burning. Some high-rise buildings may have evacuation plans that require you to stay where you are and wait for the fire department.

If you live in a multi-story house and ***you must escape from an upper story window***, be sure there is a safe way to reach the ground, such as a fire resistant fire escape ladder. Make special arrangements for children, older adults, and people with disabilities. People who have difficulty moving should have a telephone in their sleeping area.

Test doors before you open them. While kneeling or crouching at the door, reach up as high as you can and with the back of your hand touch the door, the knob, and the crack between the door and its frame. If you feel any warmth at all, use another escape route. If the door is cool, open it carefully. Be prepared to slam it shut if there is smoke or flames on the other side.

Crawl low under smoke. Smoke contains deadly gases, and heat rises. During a fire, cleaner air will be near the floor. ***If you must exit through smoke, crawl on your hands and knees***, keeping your head 12-24 inches above the floor.

Stop, Drop And Roll. If your clothes catch fire, don't run. Stop where you are, drop to the ground, cover your face with your hands, and roll over and over to smother the flames.

❖ 3. ***Keep An Eye On Smokers.*** Careless smoking is the leading cause of fire deaths in North America. Smoking in bed or when you are drowsy could be deadly. Provide smokers with large, deep non-tip ashtrays and soak butts with water before discarding them. Before going to bed or leaving home after someone has been smoking, check under and around cushions and upholstered furniture for smoldering cigarettes.

❖ 4. ***Cook Carefully.*** Never leave cooking unattended. Keep cooking areas clear of combustibles and wear clothes with short, rolled-up or tight-fitting sleeves when you cook. Turn pot handles inward on the stove where you can't bump them and children can't grab them. Enforce a "Kid-Free Zone" three feet (one meter) around your kitchen stove. If grease catches fire in a pan, slide a lid over the pan to smother the flames and turn off the heat. Leave the lid on until cool.

❖ 5. ***Give Space Heaters Space.*** Keep portable heaters and space heaters at least three feet (one meter) from anything that can burn. Keep children and pets away from heaters, and never leave heaters on when you leave home or go to bed.

❖ 6. ***Remember: Matches And Lighters Are Tools, Not Toys.*** In a child's hand, matches and lighters can be deadly. Use only child-resistant lighters and store all matches and lighters up high, where small children can't see or reach them, preferably in a locked cabinet. Teach your children that matches and lighters are tools, not toys, and should be used only by adults or with adult supervision. Teach young children to tell a grown-up if they find matches or lighters; older children should bring matches or lighters to an adult immediately.

❖ 7. ***Cool A Burn.*** Run cool water over a burn for 10 to 15 minutes. Never put butter or any grease on a burn. If the burned skin blisters or is charred, see a doctor immediately.

❖ 8. ***Use Electricity Safely.*** If an electrical appliance smokes or has an unusual smell, unplug it immediately, then have it serviced before using it again. Replace any electrical cord that is cracked or frayed. Don't overload extension cords or run them under rugs. Don't tamper with your fuse box or use improper-size fuses.

❖ 9. ***Oxygen Safety and Precautions.*** Oxygen does not explode and it does not burn. Oxygen can make a spark into a flame. Oxygen will make a flame burn hotter, bigger and much faster. To avoid the chance of fire and other possible hazards associates with oxygen, please treat oxygen with care and follow the instructions provided by Respiratory Home Services and the information contained in this handout.

REMEMBER:

Keep all oxygen equipment at least five [5] feet away from ANY heat source.