



Campfire Safety

When making a campfire, safety should be first.

Campfires are warm, provide light and cook food. Unfortunately, campfires can also be dangerous. The best way to assure a fun time is to plan ahead and follow some safety tips.

When planning a camping trip, find out if your campsite allows a campfire. Depending on the time of year and weather conditions, some areas may have a burn ban. Mercy's Injury Prevention Center recommends that you check with the local fire department to see if campfires are allowed.

- **Keep water or a fire extinguisher available.**
- **Use a designated fire pit.** If a pit is not available, the ground needs to be cleared to create an open area. The size of the area varies depending on the size of the fire. A good rule of thumb is 10 feet. Make sure no branches overhang the fire.
- **Build the fire downwind of the campsite.** This helps prevent the wind from carrying hot sparks and igniting tents and other combustibles.
- **Never use flammable liquids like gasoline to start or make a fire bigger.** This can cause dangerous flare-ups.
- **Do not leave the fire unattended.** Fires can be unpredictable and spread rapidly.
- **When finished with campfire, douse the fire and coals completely with water.** Recheck campfires prior to leaving to ensure that the fire is completely out.

Mercy Injury Prevention Center

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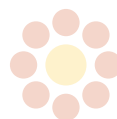
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