

Brian Kendall, M.D. Fireworks and Summer Heat

What are some firework safety tips?

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So fireworks are a huge issue in the emergency department over the summer, usually around July 4, but most people have fireworks laying around all summer because you know, maybe they didn't use them all during July 4, or they're using them during memorial day too, or, you know, somewhere they have some leftover from New Year's that they're trying to get rid of. So yes, again, seeing safety is imperative here. So you want to make sure that you're in an area that number one isn't at risk of fire. So you want to have an area that either has nothing but dirt or at least not covered in dry grass or anything's the last thing you want to do is start a wildfire. You also want to make sure that you have some sort of fire retardant available, either that's a hose, or you know something else that a fire blanket or something so that if a fire does start that you have something that you can attempt to control it with, you also want to make sure that you have a safe way of getting out of that area should a fire start. That's some of the biggest tips you can have as far as making sure that you have a safe scene. Also, you want to make sure that with the fireworks, and you have a designated person who's going to be lighting those fireworks, and then everybody else is a certain distance back depending on what your lighting, you know, it's best to be, you know, several yards back at least if not more, to enjoy the fireworks but not be in the vicinity if something goes wrong, if the tube that you're using to shoot a mortar out of falls over or you know, something else, if the firework lights prematurely or something, you don't want anybody in that general vicinity that could potentially get injured. So I always like to make sure that if we do have fireworks, I have a designated person who's lighting those fireworks and all kids and all other adults are standing far back and not getting, you know in the way of a potential accident there. And then I The other thing I would say too is don't mess with fireworks, I've seen a lot of people who try to modify them to do certain things. And we have significant injuries from that not necessarily because they're tampering with the firework itself. But usually when they light it, then it lights it goes off a little bit sooner than they were expecting. So I've seen a lot of facial injuries and hand injuries because people are tampering with fireworks and not using them in the way that they were made to be used.

What types of injuries can fireworks cause?

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The most common one we see is burns burns to the hands, which that can be difficult because our hands are obviously something that we use on a daily basis. And when you burn your hand that can lead to scar tissue that can lead to difficulty in mobility of your hand. You can also lose fingers, lose ears lose nose, lose eyes, you can have significant facial burns, which can lead to difficulty breathing. And so then we have to do things to help you continue to breathe. And so those things are very serious.

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What precautions can we take to avoid heat related injuries?

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I think the most pressing issue that we should talk about is car safety in the summer, whether that's a child or a pet, and people leaving those either those pets or those children in their car while they're just running in real quick to go into the store. Or you know, just oh, I had to just go get something, you know from my friend real quick and I was gonna come right back, they turn their car off, they close the doors, and the temperatures in that car can elevate extremely fast. There's lots of stories that have been done on this in the past where they'll put a thermometer in the car. And within minutes, the temperature in that car is over 120 degrees Fahrenheit, which is more than enough to start causing some significant

