

## Glossary of Terms:

### **Ace Bandage Wrap**

Elastic bandage used to wrap burned areas. It gives even pressure and support, thereby decreasing scar size, and improving circulation.

### **Adaptic**

A type of gauze with Vaseline on it.

### **Amputation**

Surgical removal of any body part when it cannot be saved.

### **Anesthesia**

Partial or complete loss of sensation.

General Anesthesia causes loss of consciousness. Generally administered through a tube to the lungs or through a needle to the veins.

Local Anesthesia causes loss of feeling in a particular area of the body. Usually given by injection.

Regional Anesthesia causes loss of feeling to an entire region of the body, e.g., a spinal block deadens the lower portion of the body.

### **Burns-Causes (sometimes called "etiology")**

Chemical caused by irritating chemicals such as acid or alkalis. The chemical continues to burn until it is completely flushed away with running water. Some chemicals require antidotes other than water.

- **Contact:** Injury is caused by prolonged contact with a heated surface such as a hot exhaust pipe.
- **Electrical:** Injury is caused by the electricity passing through the body and heating up the tissues. It can enter through the hand, pass through the heart and exit through the foot causing damage along the way.
- **Flame:** Injury due to sustained contact with fire.
- **Flammable Liquid:** Injury is from a burning liquid such as barbecue lighter fluid or gasoline.
- **Flash:** Injury is from an explosive blast caused by gases or electrical explosion.
- **Radiation:** Injury is from overexposure to radiant energy such as x-rays, sunlight or nuclear blast.
- **Respiratory:** Injury may be to the respiratory tract from inhalation of hot air or from breathing poisonous gases.
- **Scald:** This is the most common type of burn. Injury is from hot liquids, hot foods or steam.
- **Sunburn:** Injury is from the rays of the sun.

### **Burn Camp**

A camp where children who have been burned and sometimes siblings can attend. Often includes typical camp activities such as water sports, art activities, games, and team building activities. A place where the children all have something in common.

## **Burns-Degrees**

Tissue injury resulting from too much exposure to thermal, chemical, electrical or radioactive sources.

- **1st Degree (Superficial):** Skin is red but unbroken. There is minimal danger of infection as damage is limited to the outer layer of skin. It may be red, swollen and painful but usually heals in 3-5 days.
- **2nd Degree (Partial thickness):** Damage extends through the top layer of skin. It can re-grow unless it becomes infected and turns into a 3rd degree burn.
- **3rd Degree (Full thickness):** All skin and some underlying tissues are destroyed. Areas may be charred. It cannot heal by itself, except from the edges. Grafting is necessary.
- **4th Degree (full thickness):** Burns which extend through the skin, muscle and sometimes the bone. The term is not widely used. Called by some deep 3rd degree burns.

## **Burn Team**

A team of professionals from different disciplines that work to provide the best outcome for burn patients in the hospital setting. Often includes, Physicians, Nurses, Mental Health Professionals, Dietician, Pharmacy, Physical and Occupational Therapy, Child Life, Social Work, Chaplain, and aftercare specialists.

## **Burn Unit**

A specialized hospital unit that provides care specific to the needs of those who have suffered burn injuries. Often ranges from acute care to outpatient services.

## **Chaplain**

A medical professional who focuses on the spiritual needs of the patient.

## **Child Life Specialist**

A professional on the health care team that is trained to provide age appropriate care that minimizes the fears and anxieties related to injury and health care experiences. Encourages developmentally-appropriate activities and works to return normalcy to a child's life while hospitalized.

## **Clinic**

A place where the outpatient goes to be seen by the burn team to check his or her progress.

## **Constriction**

Binding, squeezing or excess tissue growth which narrows a body opening or an extremity.

## **Contracture**

A tightening or pulling of skin in a band-like fashion that decreases movement. and requires corrective surgery (Reconstructive)

## **Debridement**

The removal of foreign material and dead or damaged tissue from a wound. This is done in surgery, in a scrub tank, a tub, or at the bedside with scalpel, tweezers, or brush, etc.

## **Dermis**

The layer of skin just below the epidermis

## **Dietary Staff**

Trained staff who plan and prepare your food and provide supplements to assure proper nutrition for the in-hospital patients. They will help plan an appropriate diet for optimal nutrition upon discharge as well.

**Donor Site**

The area of the body in which skin is taken to cover other parts of the body which are burned.

**Dressing Change**

The changing of bandages that protect the burn wound, cleaning of the wound, and use of medical ointments that promote healing and protect from infection. Bandages are changed frequently until the skin is healed. May be painful.

**Epidermis**

The outermost layer of the skin.

**Face Mask**

A specially designed transparent mask used for those who have severe facial burns. It is used to place pressure on scars which can improve the appearance of the scars.

**Flaps**

A full thickness section of skin that is raised from one donor site and transferred to another.

**Friction Blister**

A small area of open wound caused by bumping or rubbing of new skin grafts that are in a fragile state. The frequency of blisters decreases over time as the skin becomes stronger.

**Grafts**

Skin which is surgically placed on a deeply burned area. It grows into an integral part of the new skin or at least forms a sterile covering until new skin can grow or be placed in the area. Grafts are also used to help close wounds.

- **Auto graft**  
The donor skin is from the burn patient himself. This is the only permanent kind of graft.
- **Composite Graft**  
Consists of skin and other tissue, which is transferred without blood supply as a free graft from the donor to the recipient area. For example, skin subcutaneous cartilage from ear to nose.
- **Full Thickness Skin Graft**  
A graft in which all layers of skin are excised with a scalpel or special knife and placed on a debrided, deeply burned area. This site will require closure.
- **Homo graft (Same species)**  
Donor site is from another person. Usually from cadaver.  
(Temporary graft).
- **Meshed Graft**  
Usually thin or medium split thickness graft that has been rolled through a perforating machine creating a mesh. This expands the graft so it can cover a wider surface.
- **Meterograft**  
Donor skin is from a different species, usually pigskin (xenograft). It is a temporary covering and will be rejected in time by the body.
- **Split Thickness Skin Graft**  
A graft using a donor which leaves sufficient dermis so the donor site will heal in 10-14 days.

**Granulation**

The new growth of tissue on debrided (raw) areas of the wound.

**Hyper-pigmentation**

Abnormal pigmentation (coloration) of the skin.

**Hypertrophic Scar**

The abnormal increase in the size of scar tissue

**Infection**

Condition in which the body or part of it is invaded by germs which then cause a diminished condition.

**Inhalation Injury**

Burns in the nose, throat, bronchia or lungs caused by breathing in smoke, chemicals or other gases.

**Intubation**

Insertion of a tube through the nose or mouth into the trachea or windpipe to help the patient breathe.

**Isolation**

The restriction of a patient who is suffering or is a known carrier of a communicable disease. This separation is done to prevent the spread of that disease to other patients in the unit.

**Itching**

The irritation of the skin in burned or scarred areas due to dryness, growth of blood vessels, or nerve endings. It can be very uncomfortable. It can be partially controlled by wearing pressure garments, and applying lotions and medications, or getting involved in activities to get the mind off of the itching.

**Keloid Scar**

An abnormal scar that grows beyond the boundary of the original site of a skin injury. It is a raised and ill defined growth of skin in the area of damaged skin.

**Kerlix**

A type of gauze used to bandage burn wounds.

**Ketamine**

A drug given in the vein or a muscle that temporarily causes disassociation from reality. It is used as a pain medication or for short surgical procedures.

**NPO Nothing Per Oral**

No eating or drinking by mouth.

**Occupational Therapy**

The use of activities to encourage the patient to contribute in his own recovery. This includes dressing, bathing, feeding and functional home skills such as cooking and childcare.

**Outpatient**

A patient who has left the hospital but continues to come back for visits to the doctor.

**Percent of Burns**

The percent of the total body surface area (TBSA) which is burned. Evaluation takes into account the depth of burn. This is particularly important when admitting new burns to help determine amount of fluid, and what nutrients to give and what life-saving procedures to use.

**Physical Therapy**

The use of heat, light, water, electricity, massage exercise, and radiation to return the patient to normal movement. On most burns, physical therapists use exercise and stretching as their main therapies.

**Pigmentation**

The coloration of the skin due to deposits of pigments.

**Pressure Garments**

A specially measured-to-fit elasticized pressure garment. These garments put pressure on scars to decrease scar growth and to aid blood flow. Garments are made to cover any part of the body affected by scarring, including specialized pressure masks for the face.

**Prosthesis**

Artificial replacement parts for missing body parts or organs: e.g., leg, hand, eye, ear, etc.

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)**

Post traumatic Stress Disorder, or PTSD, is a psychiatric disorder that can occur following the experience or witnessing of life-threatening events such as military combat, natural disasters, terrorist incidents, serious accidents, or violent personal assaults like rape. Most survivors of trauma return to normal given a little time. However, some people will have stress reactions that do not go away on their own, or may even get worse over time. These individuals may develop PTSD. Which can be treated by mental health professionals.

**Range of Motion (ROM)**

The amount of normal body movement in a body part. Range of motion is often limited in a burned person due to pain or scar tissue. This may limit how the person can function, e.g., walking, combing hair, scratching back, etc.

**Rehabilitation**

The process of restoring a person to a useful life and to his maximum potential after an illness or injury. It is accomplished through education and therapy. It must also be accompanied by the patient's desire to get well.

**Release**

A surgical procedure to cut into the scar tissue in a manner that allows more movement of the body parts. It may require the addition of a graft.

**Respiration/Respiratory Therapy**

The use of water, vapor, gases, (oxygen and carbon dioxide) by inhalation and breathing exercises to increase the capacity of the lungs. This includes body positioning and rhythmic pounding on the chest or back to dislodge materials from the lungs for clearer breathing.

**Reverse Isolation**

Often used in the burn unit to prevent common contaminants and germs from infecting a burn patient while the body's defenses are weakened. Everything that will come in contact with the patient must be sterilized or covered before entering the patient's room.

**Scar**

Marks left on the skin or internal organs by the healing of a wound. New connective tissue replaces the injured tissue. When it is first developed it is red or purple. Later it turns white or pink.

**Scar Maturity**

Stage of scar development when it stops growing, loses its redness, softens slightly, and usually stops itching. Occurs many months after the original injury.

**Silicone Face Pads**

Specially designed face pads placed under silicone masks to apply pressure to scars.

**Silvadine**

An antibiotic ointment used to help prevent infection.

**Silver Nitrate**

A solution of a silver salt, which is antibacterial and is sometimes used to treat burn wounds.

## **Skin**

The skin is the largest organ of the body. It is tough and flexible and protects the underlying tissues from damage from blows or infection. It also keeps out germs. As long as it is unbroken, it's practically germ proof. It is also waterproof and controls body temperature and sends sensory signals via the nerve endings. When the skin is burned, it's ability to keep out infection and keep in body fluids is damaged.

- **Epidermis** The thin outer layer of the skin.
- **Dermis** The second deeper layer of skin.

## **Splint**

A temporary device usually made of plastic or plaster of Paris to immobilize, protect or stretch an injured part of the body. It may be moveable or immovable.

## **Sterile**

Free from germs or bacteria.

## **Tissue Expander**

Tissue expanders are used to stretch the skin. A balloon type instrument is inserted under the skin and the physician fills it with saline solution over a series of weeks to gradually expand/stretch the skin.

## **Tracheostomy**

An operation cutting into the trachea (airway) usually for insertion of a tube to overcome an obstructed airway. Occurs in burn patients when the trachea swells shut from inhalation burns or injury. This is an emergency procedure calling for quick intervention to keep the patient alive.

## **T-Plasty**

Two triangular flaps which are elevated and transposed so that each flap occupies the original's position.

## **Tubbing**

Burns require frequent cleaning of the wound to prevent infection. Burn centers have specialized areas "tub room" that may include large stainless steel tubes that the patient lays in filled with water, or a large stainless steel shower bed that the patient lays on and is sprayed with water. This is often a very painful part of the healing process.

## **Xeroform**

A yellow gauze bandage used on skin donor sites.

## **Z-Plasty**

An incision, in the shape of a Z, made during surgical release of scar bands when skin grafting is not necessary.