

Caring for your child and their burn injury

Burns & Plastic Surgery /
Children's Day Care Unit

Last reviewed: October 2024

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Information for Patients, Parents & Carers

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Introduction

Your child has been sent home from hospital with a dressing in place over their burn injury. The information in this leaflet will help you care for your child at home.

Dressings

Your child will have a dressing covering their burn to protect the area. A dressing is needed until the burn is fully healed and it will need to be changed regularly. Your nurse will tell you when this will be and how often.

You will need to phone the ward or the dressing clinic if any of the following happens:

- The dressing becomes too tight.
- The dressing becomes dirty or wet.
- The dressing becomes loose or falls off.
- If too much fluid from the wound leaks through the dressing.
- If the dressing looks green or starts to smell.
- If your child is in pain after having pain relief.

Please do not remove the dressing yourself, as it is often a medicated dressing to reduce the risk of infection.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

What to do if your child becomes unwell

Very rarely a person may become unwell after a burn injury of any size. Toxic shock syndrome (TSS) is a rare but serious complication of infection. It can make a person feel really poorly very quickly and is treated as a medical emergency. In some rare, advanced cases it can be life threatening.

It is important that you monitor your child and telephone the ward if they have any of the following, as you may need to bring them back to hospital to see a doctor:

- High temperature/ shivers
- Headaches
- Rash
- Muscle aches
- Diarrhoea or is sick
- If they go off their food and drink
- If they become very sleepy
- Stops peeing

However, if your child is extremely unwell or you are very worried about their condition, seek help immediately by calling 999 or take your child to the nearest Emergency Department.

Aftercare

- **Preventing infection** - to prevent infection try to keep the dressing clean and dry. Do not take it off to look at the wound.
- **Reducing swelling, fluid or bleeding** - when there is an injury or a wound to the body this causes swelling. Swelling creates fluid that tries to escape from the body. In burns this is often a pale yellow, straw colour. By keeping the arm/ leg raised this will help reduce swelling, fluid leakage and pain.
Try not to rub, knock or wet the dressing.
- **Help with wound healing** - give your child plenty of water to drink and a high protein diet, as this will improve wound healing. Foods that are high in protein and good for wound healing include chicken, lentils, pulses, green beans, broccoli, fish and eggs. If your child suffers from kidney problems, please check with their GP before increasing protein in their diet.

What if my child is in pain?

Burns are often more painful in the first week of the injury, and then tend to settle down. Give regular pain relief, for example paracetamol and ibuprofen, for the first few days and then gradually reduce it depending on how your child reacts.

You will need to buy pain relief over-the-counter as the hospital do not supply it. Please speak to your nurse if getting this is a problem.

Instructions on how much to give and how often will be written on the box. Follow these instructions carefully. Do not give more than the recommended dose as this could be dangerous for your child.

If you are not sure if your child is safe to take paracetamol and ibuprofen, check with your child's GP.

After the burn has healed

Once the burn has been seen by a nurse and dressings are no longer needed, you should cover the healed area with a factor 50 sunscreen if the new skin is going to be out in the sun. The skin in this area will be sensitive and more likely to burn in the sun. The area could also be covered with clothing or a hat to protect it.

Your nurse will talk to you about the length of time to keep your child off school. If the burn area is knocked, it could make it worse.

Sometimes healed burns can become itchy. Regular washing and moisturising will help with this. If this is not helping, you may need to ask your GP to prescribe an antihistamine. Try not to let your child scratch the area, as it may break the skin and introduce infection, and damage the skin.

As newly healed skin is more sensitive, use cooler water to bath/ shower your child at first.

For ongoing care of the scar area, you will be given a leaflet for this and will also be advised about keeping the skin moisturised. You may be referred to our Occupational Therapy service if this will help improve the appearance of the scar.

Is my child likely to scar?

This depends on how deep the burn is rather than the size. A burn on the top layers of the skin tends to heal within about 2 weeks. If your child's burn takes longer than this, it is possible their burn was deeper and their risk of scarring is higher. Your nurse will be able to advise you, and can refer your child to our Occupational Therapy department who have therapists trained in scar management. Their advice and support can usually help to improve scarring.

Support groups

- **Changing Faces** - this is a national charity based in the UK that supports people who have disfigurements of the face or body from any cause.

The Squires Centre, 33-37 University Street, London WC1E 6JN

Tel: 0845 4500 2275 / Email: info@changingfaces.org.uk

Website: www.changingfaces.org.uk/

- **Dan's Fund for Burns** - this is a UK burns charity that offers practical help in a wide range of circumstances to burn victims in the UK.

PO Box 54394, London W2 7HJ

Tel: 020 7262 4039 / Email: info@dansfundforburns.org

Website: www.dansfundforburns.org/

- **Katie Piper Foundation** - this is a UK charity that supports burn survivors throughout their recovery journey and delivers intense rehabilitation to improve survivor outcomes.

PO Box 334, 19-21 Crawford Street, London W1H 1PJ

Tel: 07496 827266 / Website: katiepiperfoundation.org.uk/

- **Children's Burns Trust** - this is a national charity dedicated to providing rehabilitation support for burned and scald injured children and their families, as well as prevention and awareness campaigns for which there is little or no national funding.

2 Grosvenor Gardens, London SW1W 0DH

Tel: 020 7881 0902 / Email: info@cbtrust.org.uk / Website: www.cbtrust.org.uk/

Contact details

We hope this information will help you care for your child at home. If you feel you need more information or advice, or if you have any concerns, please contact:

- Children's Day Care Unit - Windsor Building, Level 4, Leicester Royal Infirmary
0116 258 6317 / 0116 258 6922 (Monday to Friday - 8am to 6pm)
- Out of hours - Ward 19, Balmoral Building, Level 6, Leicester Royal Infirmary
0116 258 5244 / 0116 258 5534
- Outreach Nurse - 07956 266983

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

જો તમને અન્ય ભાષામાં આ માહિતી જોઈતી હોય, તો નીચે આપેલ નંબર પર કૃપા કરી ટેલિફોન કરો

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਦਿੱਤੇ ਗਏ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।
Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone 0116 250 2959 or email equality@uhl-tr.nhs.uk



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