

## **Glossary**

### **Ace Bandage Wrap**

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

### **Ambulate**

Walk.

### **Amputation**

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

### **Analysis**

An examination of the patient's urine, blood or body fluids to determine what extra fluids or minerals need to be given to keep the patient alive and stable.

### **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.

### **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.

**Calcification**

Hardening of tissues due to calcium or lime deposits usually in joints, bruises, and muscle tissue.

**Clinic**

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

**Collagen**

A fibrous insoluble tissue found in skin, ligaments, cartilage and bone. When a body part is injured, the collagen heals in fairly straight uniform lines. However, after a burn injury it tends to grow haphazardly with no uniformity. It continues to grow after healing has taken place, forming scars.

**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.

**Corrective Surgery (Reconstructive)**

Surgery to correct faults, deviations, and defects of the body.

**Cosmetic Surgery**

Those procedures performed by a plastic surgeon to restore body image or enhance the appearance of parts of the body.

**Debridement**

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

**Dehydration**

Excessive loss of fluid from the body.

**Dermabrasion**

A procedure for altering scar roughness by using sandpaper or other rough material. It is dangerous and should only be done by a physician.

**Donor Site**

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

**Edema**

A condition in which the body tissues contain an excessive amount of fluid. Commonly called "Swelling."

**Eschar**

Hardened remains of dead tissue.

**Escharotomy**

Surgical incision into the eschar to relieve the pressure caused by swelling.

**Fibrosis**

Abnormal formation of fibrous tissue in a burn patient's damaged tissue.

**Flaps**

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

**Fluid Resuscitation**

The burn injury causes extensive loss of body fluids or accumulation of fluids in the wound. This necessitates replacement.

**Gavage**

Feeding with a tube which goes through the nose, down the throat and into the stomach. The food is liquid or semi liquid. The tube is called a nasal gastric tube.

**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.

**Autograft**

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.

**Homograft (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 skins 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.

**Heroic Measures**

Using all modern drugs, equipment, and personnel to save the life of a human being.

**Hyperpigmentation**

Abnormal pigmentation (coloration) of the skin.

**Hypertrophy**

The enlargement of an organ or skin.

**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.

**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 annoying. 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.

**K-wires**

Thin surgical wires which are sometimes used to immobilize a joint until the graft has adhered sufficiently.

**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 as their main therapy.

### **Pigmentation**

The coloration of the skin due to deposits of pigments.

### **Pigskin**

Prepared skin from pigs which is often used to temporarily cover burned areas until the patient can produce enough of his own skin to be harvested and placed over the area for permanent healing.

### **Plastic Surgery**

A specialty practiced by surgeons certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and dedicated to the art and science of restoring form and function to the human body.

### **Pressure Garments**

A specially measured to fit elasticized pressure garment. These garments put pressure on scars to decrease hypertrophic scar growth and to aid blood flow. Sometimes called "Jobst" after a company in Ohio that made the original pressure garments.

### **Prognosis**

Predictions as to the future of the patient and whether he will get better.

### **Prosthesis**

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

### **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.

### **Reconstructive Surgery**

Surgery to make or reconstruct body parts. This is done by combining old parts and building new ones, e.g., nose, ear, breast, 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.

### **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.

**Sepsis**

An infection in blood or tissue. (It can be fatal)

**Septic Shock**

Shock caused by bacteria in the blood stream.

**Shock**

A condition where oxygen and nutrients no longer reach cells and body tissue. In addition, body wastes build up.

**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.

**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.

**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.