

INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR PARENTS / CARERS OF A CHILD WITH A BURN INJURY AT HOME



The information in this leaflet will help you to manage your child's burn injury while at home.

IF YOUR CHILD BECOMES UNWELL

If your child shows any of the following symptoms please phone the hospital on 01-4096100 and ask to speak to the Burns & Plastics Clinical Nurse specialist or the Plastics team for advice.

You may need to come back into hospital if your child develops:

- A high temperature
- A rash
- Diarrhoea and vomiting
- Very sleepy
- Off food and drink
- Not passing urine

Your child could become very unwell very quickly so seek prompt advice if you are concerned at all from your local services who will contact the Plastics team in OLCCHC.

Burns can be very painful regardless of how big or deep they are. It is important to give your child regular paracetamol (Calpol, Neurofen.) every 4-6 hours. Please check the dose on the bottle carefully. You will be able to discuss the different kinds of pain relief with the relevant staff prior to going home.

CARE OF THE DRESSINGS

Dressings have been applied to protect and treat the burn. Please leave the bandages in place until you return to the hospital for your follow up appointment.

You will need to ring the clinic if any of the following things happen before your clinic appointment:

- The bandage becomes loose, falls off or the wound is exposed.
- The bandage is too tight or your child starts to complain that the dressing is hurting them.
- The bandage becomes wet or the wound fluid leaks through the dressing wetting their outer clothing or bedlinen.
- Your child has pain that is not relieved by paracetamol or a sudden onset of pain for not apparent reason i.e. a fall.
- The bandage becomes smelly or looks green.

EXERCISE TO REDUCE THE SWELLING

The area that has been burned will become swollen.

Exercise will help to reduce the swelling and stop the burned area getting stiff:

Hand and arm burns encourage your child to use their hand as normal. Play is their best form of physiotherapy. When your child is resting, the hand should be higher than the elbow.

Leg and foot burns encourage your child to mobilise as normal. When your child is sitting or lying down the foot should be higher than the hip.

Facial burns up to 48 hours after the injury the face may swell. This is normal and the swelling will go down in the next day or two. If excessive swelling develops (swollen eyes, difficulty breathing or eating) seek medical advice immediately. When your child is lying down you can use pillows to prop him/her up. This will help to stop the face from swelling too much. Sometimes the wound fluid will dry leaving a crust on the skin. This can be gently washed off with mild soap. The area is then treated with a topical antibiotic ointment prescribed by the Plastic team. The face does tend to look worse before it looks better.

NUTRITION

To help fight infection and to help the skin heal your child will need to eat more protein and vitamins:

Protein can be found in foods such as:

- meat
- fish
- cheese
- eggs
- milk / custard / yoghurts
- Ice cream
- Vitamins – Encourage your child to eat fresh fruit and vegetables

It is **important** to drink more milk and water than normal.

LONGER TERM CARE FOLLOWING A BURN INJURY (POST DISCHARGE FROM THE DRESSING CLINIC)

- Burn injuries that take two weeks or more to heal may leave a scar.
- At first, the area that has been burned will be red and itchy.
- Wash the area and massage with a moisturising cream such as Aveeno daily moisturiser or another unperfumed cream. This helps to stop the itching and keep the scar soft and supple. Although don't overdo it as it can cause friction to the skin.
- Remember to always wash the area to help stop the grease from building up before you apply more cream.

CARE IN THE SUN

- The skin may be sensitive after the burn. It is important to keep the area covered and out of the sun for the first year after the injury. It will burn much easier than skin that hasn't been damaged.
- Remember to regularly apply high factor sun cream over the whole of your child's face and body. Use at least Factor 25. The swim wear with the built in UV protection layers are also an excellent way to ensure your child is covered while in the sun.



REMEMBER

If you are concerned at any stage, you may contact your local GP / Nurse / Emergency Dept. or contact the hospital main phone number and ask to speak with the plastics team directly.

For more information on the [Care of a Burn Injury](#) at home please contact the Burns and Plastics Clinical Nurse Specialists in Our Lady's Children's Hospital, Crumlin, Dublin.

Contact Details:

Main Hospital Number - Phone 01 409 6100

Dressing Clinic Direct Line (Burns and Plastics CNSp) - Phone 01 409 6496

Remember: Ask your nurse if you are unsure about anything about your child's care.

Additional instructions

Developed By Burns & Plastics CNSp

St. Annes Dressing Clinic

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