

# Going Home: Burn Discharge

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Burn Unit: 905-521-2100; extension: 46350

## **Burn Follow-up Appointment**

- Burn Clinic – See appointment card
- Tele-medicine (virtual follow-up) – You will be contacted by email or telephone to arrange a Zoom visit with the nurse practitioner.
- Not required – Call the Burn Clinic, nurse practitioner (card included) or surgeon’s office (card included) if needed

## **Other Appointments**

- See attached appointment card(s)

## **Wound Care**

- Small areas of bleeding and scabs are normal
- Take pain medication and shower as directed

Your wound care has been arranged as follows:

- Burn Clinic
  - Bandages will be changed at your Burn Clinic appointment
  - Take pain medications prior to attending your appointment
- Home & Community Care Support Services (HCCSS)
  - You will have wound care in your home or at a wound clinic near you.
  - If you have not met with HCCSS before leaving hospital, you will be contacted by phone for details.
  - Please ensure the team has your current phone number, discharge address, and emergency contact.
  - HCCSS contact: 1-866-655-6402

- Self-care – You or your family have been given supplies and taught how to change your dressings as follows:

#### Burn/Grafted Burn Skin

- Location: \_\_\_\_\_
- Shower + remove old bandage
- Pat dry
- Apply in this order
  - Greasy gauze (e.g. Adaptic®/Jelonet®)
  - Normal saline moistened gauze
  - Dry gauze
  - Wrap with roll gauze (Kling®)
  - Secure with tape

#### Donor site

- Location: \_\_\_\_\_
- Xeroform® (yellow gauze) – DO NOT pull off. It stays on your skin and begins lifting once your wound is healed. Only trim the edges of the Xeroform® that lift off with a pair of clean scissors.
- Xeroform® may have white gauze on top if wet. The white gauze needs to be changed daily in this order:
  - Remove old gauze
  - Apply normal saline-moistened gauze
  - Apply layer of dry gauze
  - Wrap with roll gauze (Kling®)
  - Secure with tape
- Once the Xeroform® is dry you can stop using the white gauze cover dressing.

#### Shower

- Shower (no baths) once daily before dressing change. You will be instructed whether to remove your dressing or not prior to showering.
- Use lukewarm water (not too hot or too cold).

- Use mild, unscented soap (such as unscented Dove® or Ivory®).
- Pat dry (don't rub) with towel.

## **For Healed Skin**

- After showering, and at least two times a day or more, apply unscented, water-based moisturizing lotion.
- Do not use Vaseline Petroleum Jelly® or oil-based lotions or creams.

## **Face Care**

- You or your family will have been taught face care.

## **Heat & Cold Tolerance**

- It is normal to feel more sensitive to hot or cold.
- You may need to adjust your layers of clothing (less or more), activity level, or how much time you spend in that temperature or environment.
- Speak to your burn team if you have any questions.

## **Exposure to Sunlight**

- Healing skin is sensitive to sun and can burn easily.
- Stay in the shade and wear sunscreen on healed wounds.
- Sunscreen should be water-based and have a minimum of SPF 50. Apply 30 minutes before going outside and re-apply every 2-3 hours.
- Wear protective clothing and a wide-brimmed hat.

## **Swimming**

- No swimming, pools, lake water, or hot tubs until directed by your burn team

## **Water Blisters**

- Clear water blisters are normal. Do not pop them.
- Do not limit your activities if water blisters appear.

## **Nutrition**

- Resume a healthy, balanced diet with regular meals on discharge.
- Supplements and special vitamins are no longer required for your recovery unless specifically recommended by your dietitian.

## **Pain Management**

- Please take your medications as described.

## **Driving**

- You may be advised not to drive temporarily due to changes to your body from your burn injury, skin grafts or other health issues.
- You should not drive while taking narcotics or opiates as they may cause sleepiness.
- Please discuss any questions with your surgeon, family doctor or pharmacist.

## **Emotional Support**

- It is normal to experience changes in your mood as you cope with different stages of recovery.
- Support is available with social work, the nurse practitioner, through peer support with another burn survivor or a referral to psychiatry.
- The Phoenix Society ([www.phoenix-society.org](http://www.phoenix-society.org)) or Life After Burns ([www.lifeafterburns.ca](http://www.lifeafterburns.ca)) are also good resources.

## **Sexuality & Intimacy**

- Medications and body changes from surgery may affect sexual comfort or performance.
- Please speak with your burn team, social worker or nurse practitioner if you have or your partner has any questions.

## **Body Image**

- Changes to the body after a burn can be an adjustment for patients and families. Please speak with your burn team, social worker or nurse practitioner.

## **Exercise**

- Your therapist will tell you if you are referred to outpatient rehabilitation.
- Follow handouts provided by your therapist.
- Wear your splints as directed by your therapist.

## **Scar Management**

- Early options include wearing coban tape, tensor bandages, tubigrip and edema gloves.

## **Pressure Garments**

- Follow wearing schedule and care instructions for garments.
- If your skin breaks down or blisters, clean and cover the area with a bandage and wait 1-2 days before wearing garments.

## **Massage**

- Use water-based lotion to massage for 30 seconds over healed skin as directed by your therapist or nurse (refer to scar massage handout).

## **When to Call 9-1-1**

- Call 9-1-1 in an emergency. For example, if you are having chest pain or difficulty breathing.

## **When to Call Your Family Doctor/Walk-in Clinic**

- For general medical issues or pre-existing health issues not related to the burn

## **When to Call the Burn Clinic**

- If you have:
  - Fever, chills or flu-like symptoms
  - Blood blisters
  - Wounds that smell/have a bad odour, new drainage or pus
  - Bleeding that does not stop on its own, or soaks through the bandage
  - New swelling
  - Difficulty coping
  - Any questions about your burn care after discharge
  - Pain that is not controlled despite taking your medication as prescribed