

Minor Burn Care

Your child has a minor burn injury that the doctor feels can be cared for at home. It is very important that you read and follow these instructions to care for your child's wounds to help them heal properly.

The goal of burn care at home is to heal the skin and prevent an infection. Most burns will heal in 10-20 days. The burn must be cleaned and the bandage changed one time each day. If the inner dressing becomes dirty or falls off, it will need to be changed again.

Why do I need to change my child's bandage every day?

Changing your child's bandage once each day will help keep the wound clean, free of infection and help it heal.

What supplies will I need?

Use these supplies:

For cleaning:

- Mild soap (such as Dove®) to help clean the wound.
- Clean washcloth for cleaning the wound.
- Clean towel or paper towel to dry the wound and lay the clean dressing on.

To cover the burn:

- Non-stick gauze, such as Telfa® or Intersorb®.
- Gauze to hold the dressing in place, such as Kerlex® or Kling®.

Medicines:

- Polysporin® for use on face wounds
- Silvadene® for use on other wounds (not on the face)
- Pain Medicine: Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or Ibuprofen (Motrin®)

What steps do I follow?

Before you start, be sure you have given the pain medicine (as recommended) at least ½ hour before the dressing change.

- **Get ready for the dressing change.**
 1. Gather the supplies. If you are putting your child in the bathtub for the cares, first clean the bathtub with a cleanser. Rinse the tub well to remove all of the grit from the cleanser.
 2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
 3. Prepare the dressings. Using your fingers or a tongue depressor to scoop out some of the burn cream and apply it to the dressing. Lay the dressing on a clean towel or paper towel, cream side up. Having the dressing ready to go on the wound after it is cleaned will make it more comfortable for your child.

Steps to follow (continued)

- **Clean your child's burn wounds.**

1. Take off the old dressing. If an area is stuck, soak the area with water to help loosen it.
2. Check the burn for signs of infection such as:
 - Redness
 - Swelling
 - Drainage that is green colored or smells bad.

Note: Old burn cream will look slimy on the wound. This is normal and is not a sign of infection.

3. Gently wash the burn with mild soap and a clean, wet washcloth. As you wash the wound, you may notice a thin layer come off of the wound. This is old burn cream and some wound drainage. This needs to come off in order for the wound to heal well. The wound should look pink - not bleeding.
4. If there are blisters, do not pop them. If the blisters are larger than the size of a quarter, let your health care provider know.
5. After washing the wound, rinse it with clean, warm tap water. Gently pat it dry.

- **Apply the dressing.**

1. Cover the wound with the prepared dressing. Overlap the dressing onto the healthy skin. This will help keep the bandage on the burn wound when your child moves around.
2. Wrap the dressing with cotton gauze and secure it with tape. Be sure the gauze is not too tight.

What else can I do to help my child heal?

- Give your child a healthy diet that is high in protein and calories.
- Some burns begin to itch as they heal. Try not to let your child scratch by keeping the burn covered. Sometimes using mittens on your child's hands will remind them not to itch. Ask your child's health care provider about using a medicine such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) for the itching.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child:

- Shows any signs of infection such as redness, swelling, bad-smelling or green colored drainage.
- Has a temperature over 101.2°F (38°C).
- Bleeds from the wound that does not stop with two minutes of pressure with your hand.
- Does not want to eat or drink.
- Has pain and/or itching that is not helped by the medicine.
- Has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to provide you with additional information about your child's care. Diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up should be provided by your health care professional.