

Understanding Burn Injury

BURN MODEL SYSTEM

BMS

ADVANCING RECOVERY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE

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Center

Eric leads a support group for people with a burn injury. Today, he has invited a special guest for those in the group who are new to burn injuries.

HI EVERYONE. I WOULD LIKE YOU TO MEET DR. MARIA MENDEZ, AN EXPERT IN BURN CARE. SHE IS HERE TODAY TO HELP US UNDERSTAND BURN INJURY.

HELLO! IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU! I WOULD LIKE TO HEAR YOUR STORY. HOW DID YOUR BURN INJURY HAPPEN?

MY DAUGHTER HAD BOILING WATER SPILLED ON HER.

I SURVIVED A HOUSE FIRE.

I GOT A GREASE BURN AT THE RESTAURANT WHERE I WORK.

Understanding Burn Injury

THANK YOU FOR SHARING. ONE THING YOU MAY HAVE NOTICED IS THAT BURNS CAN HAPPEN IN MANY WAYS. COMMON CAUSES INCLUDE FIRE, HOT LIQUIDS, OR GREASE.



Other causes of burns include:

- Heat from an explosion
- Contact with something hot (i.e., hot iron)
- Chemicals
- Electricity



First-degree burns damage only the first layer of the skin (epidermis).

Second-degree burns damage the first and second layers (dermis) of the skin.

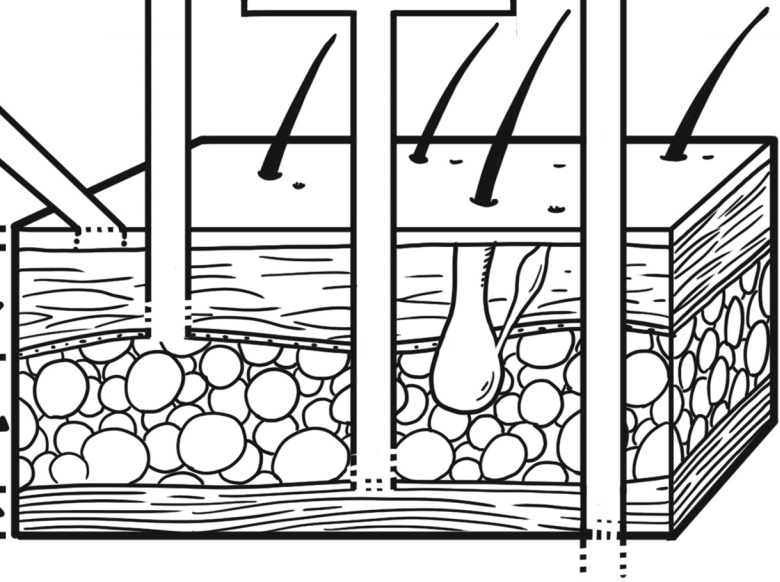
Third-degree burns damage the first and second layers of the skin and deeper tissue (hypodermis).

Fourth-degree burns and deeper destroy the skin plus fat, muscle, and sometimes bone.

THERE ARE FOUR DEGREES OF BURN INJURY.



Epidermis →
Derma →
Fat →
Muscle →



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NOW, I'M GOING TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT NUTRITION, INFECTIONS, SKIN GRAFTS, AND MENTAL HEALTH.



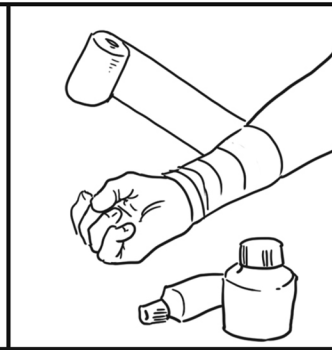
Eating well is a key part of recovery. To help a burn injury heal, eat a healthy, balanced diet. Your burn team may recommend supplements or additional feeding to help you heal and prevent infection.



Burns can get infected. To help prevent infection, people with burns, their family members, friends, and caregivers should wash their hands with soap and water frequently. People with burns should also practice careful wound care, use compression to prevent swelling, and look out for signs of infection (e.g., worsening pain, spreading redness, new discharge, more open wounds, feeling unwell).



Wash Hands



Practice Careful Wound Care



Use Compression




Look for signs of infection

Dr. Mendez explains that deep and/or large burns may require a skin graft. The burn tissue is removed under anesthesia. A thin layer of skin is removed from a donor site and placed on the wound where the burn once was as a graft. The graft is sometimes put into a meshing machine to allow it to spread wider and cover a larger area.

It's common to feel anxious or upset after a burn. Burn teams include mental health experts (e.g., counselors, psychologists, psychiatrists). Talk to them about your feelings and concerns and learn ways to cope with and adapt to your injury.

THE DONOR SITE WILL HEAL ON ITS OWN SINCE ONLY A THIN LAYER WAS REMOVED.

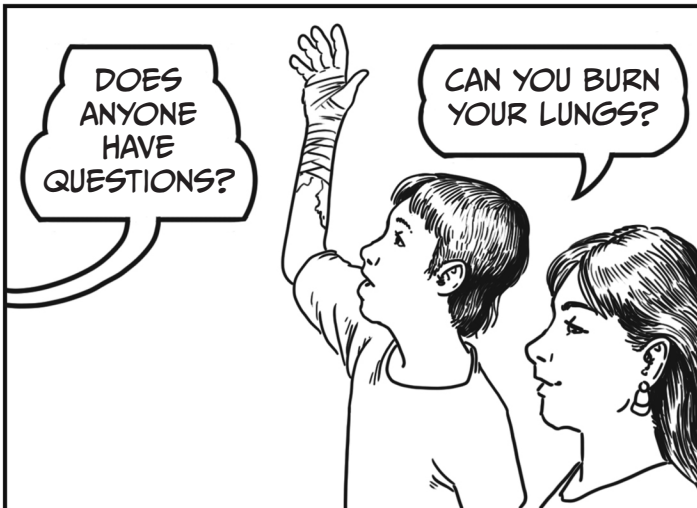




THOUGH MOST PATIENTS DO MUCH OF THEIR REHAB AT HOME, SOME MAY NEED TO GO TO A TREATMENT CENTER FOR REHAB. REHAB USES DIFFERENT KINDS OF THERAPY SUCH AS ROUTINE STRETCHING, EXERCISE, POSITIONING AIDS AND SPLINTS.

Patients may go to one of the following types of treatment centers for rehabilitation:

1. A burn unit or clinic
2. An inpatient rehab hospital
3. An outpatient therapy clinic
4. A skilled nursing facility



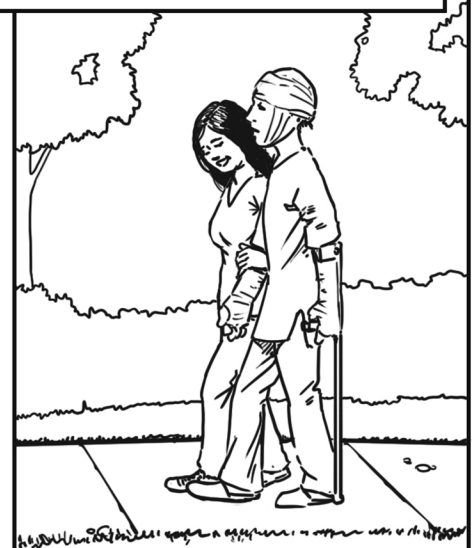
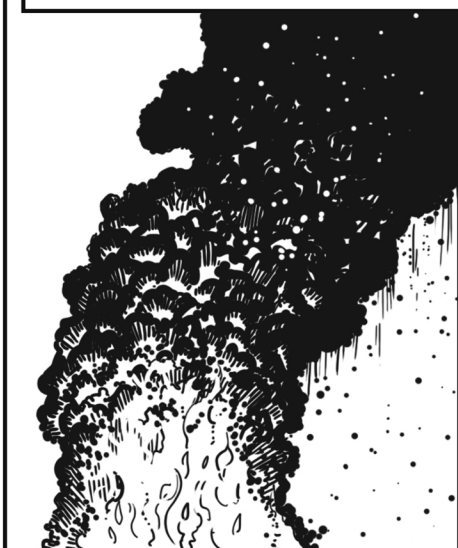
DOES ANYONE HAVE QUESTIONS?

CAN YOU BURN YOUR LUNGS?

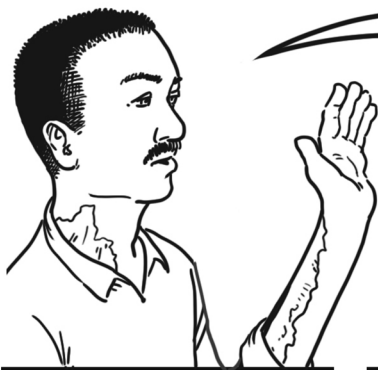


YES, YOU CAN. WHEN YOU BREATHE IN SMOKE OR TOXIC GAS, YOU MAY GET AN INHALATION INJURY.

Lung damage from inhalation injuries depends on the type of gas and smoke particles breathed in and on length of exposure. However, most people who have inhalation injury get better over time and regain their pre-injury lung function.



Understanding Burn Injury



WHAT ARE SOME COMMON SYMPTOMS OF BURN INJURY?



BURN RECOVERY IS DIFFERENT FOR EACH PERSON. THIS MEANS THAT THE SYMPTOMS OF BURNS ALSO MAY VARY FOR EACH PERSON.

Next, Dr. Mendez explains that, as patients heal, they may have pain, feel tired, itch, or experience temperature sensitivity.



You can find resources on burn injury at <https://msktc.org/burn>.



MSKTC.ORG/BURN



THERE ARE MANY RESOURCES FROM YOUR BURN CENTER AND FROM THE BURN MODEL SYSTEM THAT CAN HELP YOU WITH YOUR CONCERNS AND QUESTIONS.

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Source: The content of this infocomic has been adapted from the factsheet entitled Understanding a Burn Injury, which was developed by Laura C. Simko, BS, Boston-Harvard Burn Model System; Emily A. Ohrman, BA, Boston-Harvard Burn Model System; Gretchen J. Carrougner, MN, RN, Northwest Regional Burn Model System; and Nicole S. Gibran, MD, FACS, Northwest Regional Burn Model System, in collaboration with the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center. It was illustrated by Marty Two Bulls Sr.

Our health information content is based on research evidence whenever available and represents the consensus of expert opinion of the Burn Injury Model System directors.

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Disclaimer: This information is not meant to replace the advice of a medical professional. You should consult your health care provider about specific medical concerns or treatment. The contents of this infocomic were developed under grants from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR grant numbers 90DP0082 and 90DPKT0009). NIDILRR is a Center within the Administration for Community Living (ACL), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The contents of this infocomic do not necessarily represent the policy of NIDILRR, ACL, HHS, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

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