



Information for patients and carers

Important contact information

Victorian Adult Burns Service at The Alfred

55 Commercial Road,
Melbourne VIC 3004

03 9076 2000

bnp@alfred.org.au

www.vicburns.org.au



Caring for your face burn

The aim is to have your face burn healed within 10-14 days. Healing within this time frame minimises the risk of scarring. To achieve this, you will be supported to look after your face burn independently.

Paraffin is flammable.

Do not smoke or be near open flame.

You will need

1. A shower, clean bowl or bathroom basin
2. A mild wash solution (e.g. Dermaveen Soap Free Wash[®])
3. Clean cloths (face washer or similar)
4. Clean towel
5. Paraffin ointment (50% white soft & 50% liquid paraffin ointment e.g. HealthE, Dermeze[®])
6. Mirror
7. Razor / clipper
8. A simple moisturiser (e.g. DermaVeen Moisturising Lotion[®] or Sorbolene Cream).

Washing your face

- Take analgesia 30 minutes prior to face wash if required.
- Wash your hands.
- **Men:** Shave facial hair in and around the burn (using a good quality razor) daily. Use paraffin, diluted mild wash solution or a water based gel as a lubricant (shaving cream will irritate and cause pain).
- Showering daily with your face burn exposed helps with thorough cleaning. (You should avoid washing burns in tank water. Sterile bottled water should be used).
- When washing in the shower, pour the mild wash solution on to a clean cloth. The mild wash solution should be approximately the size of a 20 cent piece.
- Run the cloth under warm water for 3-5 seconds to dilute this solution.

- Your face burn should be thoroughly cleansed of all slough, residual ointment, crusting and loose skin prior to rinsing.
- If you are not showering, dilute 3 mL of the mild wash solution in 2L of warm tap water and use this to wash your face. Rinse you face thoroughly after washing.
- Wash frequency should begin at 4-6 hourly. The frequency of washes may need to be increased depending on the amount of exudate, slough, crusting, discomfort or tightness.
- The frequency of washes should not interrupt your sleep overnight.
- Rinse face with warm tap water.
- Pat dry with a clean cloth or towel.

Ointment application

- Unhealed areas will appear raw – Apply paraffin ointment in a thin layer over the unhealed areas after each face wash.
- Healed areas will have a dull pink appearance. When the skin is healed you can stop using the paraffin and apply a simple moisturiser in a thin layer.
- Aim to let the skin 'normalise' and gradually reduce the use of moisturiser application.
- If applying creams frequently, wash between applications to avoid build-up of product residue.
- Perform regular face stretches / exaggerated range of motion to ensure skin heals with good stretch.

Ongoing care

- Written information about 'post burn skin care' is available in the 'burns discharge booklet' and www.vicburns.org.au
- Once healed it is important to let the healed skin return to its normal function. Only apply moisturiser if the skin is dry.
- After your face has healed be sun smart.
- Stay out of direct sunlight for at least TWO summers, so you avoid sunburn and pigment mismatch of the fragile new skin.
- Wear a hat and use a broad spectrum, low irritant / hypoallergenic Sun Protection Factor (SPF) 30+ (or higher).
- Thick creams can cause pore blockages. Use moisturisers and SPF of 'milk' to 'lotion' consistency and wash any residue and cream build up off the skin.
- Always test a small patch of skin first when trying new moisturiser, SPF or make up on the healed skin. Stop using if irritation occurs.

If you are concerned about recovery, appearance, body image or returning to usual activities contact the burns unit.