

Victorian Adult Burns Service

Outpatient information for patients

Post burn skin care

About this leaflet

This leaflet provides information regarding how to care for healed burnt skin.

Sun exposure

Newly healed skin is sensitive to sun. You should avoid unnecessary sun exposure. If it is not possible to cover healed burns with clothing, a high protection factor, low irritant sunscreen should be applied.

Cleansing and washing healed skin

Newly healed skin is frequently sensitive to extremes of temperature, and a tepid bath or shower may only be tolerable. A mild non-perfumed soap will minimise sensitivities. Bath oils may reduce the tendency for healed skin to become dry and scaly. All efforts should be made to avoid soap contact with unhealed wounds.

Application of moisturizer

Moisturizer should be applied at least twice daily to healed skin due to damage to the skins oil secreting glands. Ensure skin has been cleaned first to avoid buildup of moisturizer residue and minimise pore blockage.

Managing itch

Itching is a common problem especially in the first few months after the burn has healed. In some instance it can be intractable, interfering with sleep and causing wound breakdown. It is important NOT to scratch. Lukewarm showers, bath oil, colloidal oatmeal products, and moisturizers may help alleviate itching. In some instances, medications such as antihistamines maybe required, please discuss with your health care practitioner.

Blisters and cysts

Newly healed skin is fragile and prone to breakdown. Occasionally small blisters and cysts may appear which are not infected. Blisters and cysts should be covered with a protective dressing and usually heal without need of further treatment. If they are persistent, further investigation by a health practitioner is required.

Scar contracture

It is difficult to predict the amount of scarring, if any, will occur. Your healthcare practitioner may have planned scar management techniques with you which are important to follow. any concerns about scarring should be, discussed with your health care practitioner to ensure appropriate follow up.