Burn care

When your child is recovering from a burn on their body, it's important to change the dressing often so your child heals quickly and does not get an infection. Follow these directions for caring for your child’s burn.

**How do I care for my child’s face and neck burns?**

- Wash your child’s face and neck burns at least two times a day, removing all old ointment and any loose tissue.
- Apply bacitracin ointment to all open areas.
- If the bacitracin ointment rubs off during the day, reapply it as often as needed to keep the wounds moist.

**How do I care for silver sulfadiazine and non-adhering dressings?**

You will apply silver sulfadiazine if your child had second or third-degree burns. If your child has less severe burns, you will generally apply non-adhering dressings. Below are instructions for changing your child’s dressings at home:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Silver sulfadiazine (Thermazene/Silvadene) dressings</th>
<th>Non-adhering (Adaptic) dressings</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change the dressing twice a day.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wash the burn with a washcloth, using mild soap and warm water. Remove all old ointments and any loose skin. Blot the area dry.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Put a thick coat of silver sulfadiazine over the burn site. It should look like frosting on a cake.</td>
<td>Put a very thin coating of bacitracin ointment on open areas only.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cover the burn site with a small amount of gauze netting. Silver sulfadiazine works better when air can get through the dressing.</td>
<td>Put non-adhering dressing over the ointment. Do not overlap the dressing too much. Cover the burn site with a small amount of gauze wrap. Then cover the area with gauze netting.</td>
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</table>
How should I control my child’s pain?
Dressing changes can be painful, and medicine cannot take all the pain away. However, you may want to give your child pain medicine, 30 minutes before you change their dressing.

Will my child need to follow a special diet?
Drinking liquids helps your child heal faster. Give your child juices and drinks high in protein and calories. Encourage your child to drink liquids. Be sure your child eats well-balanced and nutritious meals.

Should my child take part in activities?
When your child exercises the burned part of their body, it helps pain and swelling go down. It also helps your child heal faster. Unless their healthcare provider says otherwise, your child should join in normal activities.

Can my child bathe with a burn wound?
When caring for a burn, it is helpful for your child to have a daily bath. Shampoo and soaps will not harm the burn injury. Before you put your child in the tub, wash the burn with a washcloth using mild soap and warm water. Remove all old ointments and any loose skin.

How do I know if the burn site is infected?
Your child may develop an infection called cellulitis (sell-you-LITE-us). It looks like a red patch spreading from the burn wound, and the skin around it will be warm and swollen. Cellulitis is easily treated, but call the doctor right away if you see any signs of infection. It is normal for your child to have a low-grade fever when they have burn injuries.

How do I care for my child’s burn site after it has healed?
When the burn site has healed, it will look pink and shiny with no drainage. Apply moisturizer and sunscreen as needed throughout the day. This will help prevent further injury to the site. If your child is playing in the water, apply sunscreen every 30 minutes.

Notes

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