

**This information is intended as general guide only.**

## **DISCHARGE PLANNING INFORMATION**

### **ACTICOAT ON WOUNDS**

#### **WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:**

1. Dressings do not need to be protected during shower. Dressings need to be moistened but **NOT** saturated, and can be 'pat-dried' with a towel until just moist.
2. Only when dressings feel as if they are drying out, and causing discomfort, lightly spray with water to re-moisten them.
3. Things to be aware of:
  - **wound becomes hot to touch,**
  - **wound has increased pain or swelling,**
  - **redness starts to spread where previously skin was pale and healthy,**
  - **wound has an increase in discharge or odour,**
  - **or if you have a fever,**

These are signs of infection which must be discussed with your GP or return to the Emergency Department at the hospital, if one or more of these occur before your next clinic appointment.

4. **If you have** burns on lower legs – “blood rush” pain may be experienced when lowering feet to ground. If this occurs, ‘wriggle’ toes and move feet to increase circulation and then gradually lower feet to floor.
5. Apply moisturising cream to healed burn areas to protect the skin from becoming dry.
6. Apply prescribed ointment to face if needed.
7. Ensure burn areas are protected from direct sunlight and glare, at all times. Broad brim hat, long sleeve cotton shirts and long pants are best to cover burn areas as required. PABA-free sunscreen is recommended.
8. Itch can be a major problem with burns. **It is important NOT to scratch.** Scratching can cause skin breakdown in healed areas which will result in more pain and discomfort. Rubbing has similar results to scratching and should also be avoided. Take prescribed medication for itch as given on discharge or see your local GP for a prescription. If the itchy area has no dressings, apply extra moisturiser which may also help relieve itch.

## **THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT YOUR CARE AT HOME:**

1. Dressings may become brown in colour - this is just the silver from the Acticoat dressing staining the adhesive tape/handy gauze. It is not harmful to normal skin or wounds and you may want to protect clothing, bed linen and/or mattress.
2. Keep exercising the affected limb even if Acticoat and adhesive tape/handy gauze are in place. It is important to maintain full range of movement. Use extra adhesive tape/handy gauze to patch up any loose tape.
3. If you are taking pain relieving medication, sleeping tablets or medication to relieve nerve pain, you may experience drowsiness. Always read the instruction leaflet that is provided with your medication and pay particular attention to any **warnings about driving or operating machinery** while taking this medication. If you feel drowsy or light headed or your pain is worrying you, **you should not drive**. Make arrangements for a family member or friend to drive you or use public transport.
4. The skin may be extremely sensitive to skin care products you have used in the past. Before recommencing your usual skin care products, perform a test patch on affected skin and if any concerns, consult your Doctor.

## **FOLLOW-UP:**

1. RBWH Burns clinics are held at Specialist Outpatient Services on Level 1 in the Dr. James Mayne Building.
2. An appointment will be telephoned through to you.
3. Take your pain medication as prescribed approximately half an hour before your appointment, if required. This will help manage any pain associated with the change of dressings. Please bring along your medication to the burns clinic, as you may need to take more if required.
4. Prior to clinic appointment, apply clean vegetable oil or oil based moisturiser (sorbolene, paraffin cream) to the adhesive tape/handy gauze, this will aid removal. This will not harm your burn wounds or the Acticoat. **N.B.** Cling film can be wrapped over the dressings to stop the oil from seeping onto your clothes and car seats.