Burn Pressure Garments

When a minor burn heals, the new skin looks and feels almost the same as before the burn injury. When the burn is deeper, the skin takes a longer time to heal and may require a skin graft. Deeper burns can cause scars. Some scars may be small, soft and flat and do not cause problems. Other scars can be large and raised. These scars can cause problems with movement and appearance. A burn pressure garment can help soften and flatten large scars.

**How often does a burn garment need to be worn?** A burn garment must be worn all the time. The only time a garment would not be worn is when bathing or exercising.

**How should a burn garment fit?** A burn garment should be tight with no wrinkles. This will provide complete compression against your scars. With normal wear and care of the garment, it should last about three months before it stretches out and is no longer snug enough. With normal growth and changes in scars, new measurements may need to be taken for garments to continue to provide compression.

**How do I wash a burn garment?**
Burn garments may be washed in the washing machine with plain laundry detergent. Burn garments will fit best if they are washed daily. Burn garments may be placed in the dryer on low heat, or lay flat to air dry.

**What if a blister forms?**
Blisters are a normal occurrence when wearing a burn garment and usually disappear in 2-3 days. If blisters persist or get larger instead of healing, call the number below.

**What precautions need to be used with burn garments?** Burn garments are too tight if body parts turn blue, become cold, or begin to tingle or feel like pins and needles. If this happens, take the garments off and wet with water. While the garment is wet, place an object slightly larger than the opening to stretch it. Leave the object in place in the garment until the garment is dry (usually overnight).

**How do I stretch an opening on a burn garment?**
- To stretch a sleeve or stocking opening, use a can of soup or a large potato. Place the opening of the garment directly over one of these items.
- To stretch glove finger openings use the fat end of a carrot, battery, pencil or fat crayon. Place the opening of the garment directly over one of these items.
- To stretch glove wrist openings use a small plastic cup or small potato. Place the opening of the garment directly over either of these items.

**DO NOT** wear a garment that is too tight until you have spoken with the burn nurse or therapist.

**Who do I call for questions or concerns?**
During normal business hours: Jill Evans, RN at 843-792-3852 or Ryan Curry, RN at 843-792-6909
Evenings and weekends: 843-792-2123 Have the hospital operator page the pediatric surgery resident on call.

This handout was developed to help patients understand more about injury prevention measures. It is meant to be used as a guide to supplement your healthcare provider’s instructions. Please consult your physician if you have any questions.