



Queensland
Trauma Education

BURNS TRAUMA

Escharotomy in severe burns

Case discussion

Participant resource kit

CSDS



Clinical Skills Development Service



Queensland Trauma Education

The resources developed for Queensland Trauma Education are designed for use in any Queensland Health facility that cares for patients who have been injured as a result of trauma. Each resource can be modified by the facilitator and scaled to the learners needs as well as the environment in which the education is being delivered, from tertiary to rural and remote facilities.

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Queensland Trauma Education

Burns Trauma – Escharotomy in severe burns: Case discussion – Participant resource kit Version 1.0

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Cover image source: Metro North Health, Recommended Lines of Escharotomy.

<https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/06/recommended-lines-of-escharotomy.pdf>

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About this training resource kit

This resource kit provides healthcare workers with the knowledge of indications for escharotomy in severe burns including the critical procedural steps.

National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards



Learning objectives

By the end of this session the participant will be able to:

- Understand the indications for escharotomy in the management of severe burns.
- Understand the procedural steps of escharotomy including identification of anatomical landmarks.
- Understand the clinical assessment and criteria following escharotomy to determine adequacy of tourniquet release.

Supporting resources

- Clinical guideline: Escharotomy for Burn Patients (2nd edition) - Agency for Clinical Innovation, NSW Statewide Burn Injury Service. Download from: https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/162633/Escharotomy-for-Burn-Patients.pdf

Overview of burns trauma

Injury following a burn can be complex, with significant variation in both the aetiology and severity requiring prompt clinical assessment and management. As with all trauma presentations, patients who have sustained a burn injury are best managed in a systematic manner with a thorough primary and secondary survey.

Additionally, a focus on the burn injury pattern, characteristics and identification of high-risk features will help ensure optimal patient management.

Knowledge of the initial management strategies for burn injury, the use of a consistent, standardised approach in determining burns severity and depth, and recognising potential complications is critical for patient survival.

In the management of severe burns with the presence of circumferential burn injury, an escharotomy is required to primarily restore perfusion and circulation, and in the case of thoracic circumferential burns, restore ventilation and oxygenation.

Further reading

| RBWH Burns Information for Practitioners | |
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| Organisation | Metro North Health |
| Link | https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/healthcare-services/burns/information-for-practitioners |

| ACI State-wide Burns Service Clinical Guidelines | |
|--|---|
| Organisation | NSW Health |
| Link | https://www.aci.health.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/250020/Burn-patient-management-guidelines.pdf |

| The Burns Registry of Australia and New Zealand: Progressing the evidence base for burn care | |
|--|---|
| Publication | The Medical Journal of Australia |
| Link | https://doi.org/10.5694/mja16.00511 |

| QAS Clinical Practice Guideline: Trauma/Burns | |
|---|---|
| Organisation | Queensland Ambulance Service |
| Link | https://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au/docs/clinical/cpg/CPG_Burns.pdf |

| Patient Fact Sheet – Burns Patient information | |
|--|---|
| Organisation | Metro North Health |
| Link | https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/rbwh/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2017/06/burns-patient-factsheet.pdf |

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