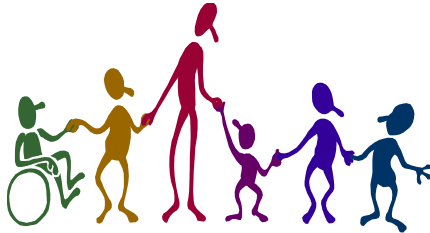


# The BurnNet

April 2016, Volume 35, No. 4

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## OUR GROUP MEETING

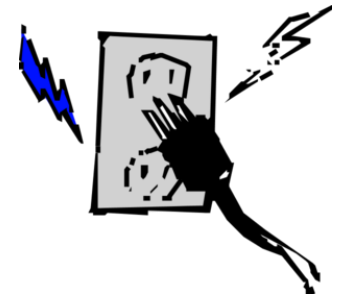


Thursday, **April 7**, 7:30-9:00pm  
Directors Conference Room  
First Floor, Main Hospital

The Burn Recovery Support Group is a monthly meeting where burn survivors, families and significant others, discuss issues and raise questions related to their injury. For more info, call (916) 734-5596.

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN THE HOME

Our lives are dependent on electricity, 24 hours a day. It is such an important part of our day-to-day living that it is almost impossible to fathom a world without electricity. Even while we sleep, electricity is keeping our food cold and our security systems operating. Throughout the day, throughout the year, we tend to take electricity for granted. However, as fire and emergency service workers and burn care professionals, we see the results, often devastating, when electricity escapes its insulation or is taken for granted at the wrong time and place.



A severe electrical shock can cause much more damage to the body than is visible. The most common electric shock-related injury is a burn. Electrical burns are the result of the electric current flowing through tissues and bone. The heat generated by the current flow through the body causes tissue damage. Electrical burns are very serious and should receive immediate medical attention. Arc or flash burns are caused by an electric arc or explosion, but are not true electrical burns, because the current does not pass through the body. They are still serious injuries and should also receive prompt medical attention. Contact burns may result when skin comes in contact with hot surfaces of electrical appliances or overheated electric conductors or equipment. Clothing may be ignited in an electrical accident, resulting in a flame burn.

## GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

- Disconnect appliances by pulling on the plug, not the cord.
- If an appliance has a three-prong plug, use it only in a three-slot outlet. Never force it or remove a prong to make it fit a two-slot outlet.
- Check electrical tools regularly for signs of wear. If a cord is frayed or cracked, replace it. Replace any tool if it causes even small electrical shocks, overheats, shorts out or gives off smoke or sparks.
- Never use electrical appliances near water
- Before attempting any appliance repair, unplug it.
- Attach extension cords to appliances before outlets.
- Keep clothes, curtains and other potentially combustible items at least three feet away from all heaters, whether electric, gas or kerosene-fueled.
- If an electric power line is down on or near your home, keep everyone out of the area and call 9-1-1 or your local electric utility.

## QUOTE

Someone once asked me how I hold my head up so high after all I've been through. I said, it's because no matter what, I AM A SURVIVOR. Not a victim.

~Patricia Buckley



## QUESTION:

I recently lost a lot of weight and now have a lot of excess skin. Will the burn center pay for my skin reduction surgery if I agree to donate the skin to help burn patients?

## ANSWER:

Our burn center is asked this question quite often by people who have lost large amounts of weight and are left with too much extra skin. We congratulate you on your tremendous effort to get healthy, and truly appreciate that you wish to donate; however, this kind of donation is just not possible. I do not know of any burn center or tissue bank that would pay for a donor's skin reduction expenses for the purpose of obtaining skin for skin grafting procedures. Our burn center does not obtain live-donor skin for several reasons:

It is extremely difficult to obtain a skin graft from tissue that has been removed during tissue reduction surgery. Skin grafts used for burn patients are only 15/1000 (0.015) of an inch thick and do not include any underlying tissues, while skin reduction surgery involves the removal of skin and attached tissues.



Obtaining skin from a live donor is cost-prohibitive for a temporary wound covering. Although donated skin can provide protection from infection and loss of fluids during a burn patient's initial healing, a subsequent graft of the patient's own skin is required, as the human body will always reject any donor skin within a few weeks.

Also, abdominoplasty (a.k.a. tummy tuck) with skin harvesting requires an entire surgical team (doctors, anesthesiologists, tissue recovery technicians, nurses, etc.), not only in the operating room, but in your care and treatment after the procedure. And, although it is a lot to you, skin obtained from reduction surgery is minimal when compared to the amount that can be obtained from a deceased skin donor.

Additionally, the FDA requires that tissues recovered from living donors must be placed into quarantine for six months. At the end of six months, all serologic testing (HIV and Hepatitis) of the donor must be repeated before that tissue can be used. In comparison, a donation of skin from a deceased donor requires only trained tissue recovery technicians, and they can obtain the tissue after the body has been sent to the morgue, keeping expenses to a minimum. Also, cadaveric (deceased) donated tissue can be used for transplant as soon as quality assurance testing is complete.

Have you checked with your medical insurance company regarding coverage of the procedure? I have a friend who also lost a significant amount of weight- after gastric bypass surgery. His insurance paid for the initial excess skin removal as well. He said he will need more reconstructive surgery that is not covered by his insurance, but I don't know the details. It never hurts to ask. Good luck and congratulations again!

~Deb Jones RN

## ARE YOU RECEIVING THE BURNNET VIA E-MAIL?

Would you like to be on the mailing list to receive The BurnNet every month?  
Email Deb Jones RN at: [debjones@ucdavis.edu](mailto:debjones@ucdavis.edu)



## OTHER SUPPORT OPTIONS

- Bothin Burn Center Burn Support Group, San Francisco  
4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm  
Call 800-755-2876 for details and directions

- Santa Clara Burn Support Group, San Jose  
1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of each month, 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm  
Call 408-885-6670 for details and directions

- Phoenix Society – Live Online Support at [www.phoenix-society.org](http://www.phoenix-society.org)

- **Peer Support**

Every Wednesday 6:00 – 7:30PM PST

- **Facilitated Parent Support**

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month 6:00-7:30PM PST



## PHOENIX SOCIETY ONLINE LEARNING



For the first time, burn survivors and their families are able to participate in free online learning courses designed to empower, with the tools to handle questions, stares and social situations after a burn injury! In partnership with Target Solutions, Phoenix Society's Online Learning is a web-based program developed by burn survivors, family members, and burn care professionals. Enroll now at the following link:

[www.phoenix-society.org/community/stayconnected/online-learning-community/](http://www.phoenix-society.org/community/stayconnected/online-learning-community/)

## BURN SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

During our last meeting a burn survivor credited a page in our Journey Packet for the birth of his child. Of course, we all got a giggle out of the comment, but it was requested by several attendees that I reprint in the BurnNet Newsletter. So here it is:

Surviving a burn injury is surviving a huge and serious trauma. Doctor appointments and treatment, suddenly dominate your life, and that of your partner, – and all of the attention is focused on the burned skin. In this scary situation, it is not unusual for sex to take a back seat for a while. However, when you have healed most of your wounds and gathered enough strength to take an interest in ordinary life once again, it is normal to rediscover an interest in sex.

In most relationships, serious illness can result in anxiety and uncertainty for both partners. The patient or significant other may be afraid that sex could cause physical injuries. Even after patients recover, they may worry that having sex will cause the skin to break down again. If your skin is healed (no more open wounds or blisters), actual physical injury is unlikely. However, pain, anticipatory or real, may occur during initial love sessions. The easiest way to explore this is most importantly: Go slow!

Burn survivors have spent most of their time since the injury having control taken from them. The nurse, doctor, therapist, or partner makes all their decisions. Once you and your significant other agree to discover the possibilities, I recommend four steps to initiate that exploration... what I call **STAR**:

**S** Seek permission or ask to be touched.

**T** Touch gently.

**A** Ask how it felt.

**R** Repeat, if pleasant.



Especially when starting a new intimate relationship, people ignorant of burn injuries may also have irrational fears that the scar tissue may be contagious or painful when they are not. These kinds of thoughts and misconceptions can bring a relationship to a standstill. It is vital for couples in this situation to talk to each other – or a doctor – to dispel any fears or uncertainties. You may also benefit from getting some counseling with a sex or relationship therapist.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### MARCH 22 DOS COYOTES

6450 Folsom Blvd. #110, East Sacramento 4:00 PM-8:00 PM ONLY!  
Come out and enjoy some delicious food, engaging atmosphere, exceptional value AND give to the Firefighters Burn Institute. 20% of your purchase will go back to this great organization! MUST present flyer when ordering! Go to [www.ffburn.org](http://www.ffburn.org) to get the flyer!



### APRIL 8 CHIPOTLE MEXICAN GRILL

775 Ikea Ct, Sacramento 5:00 PM-9:00 PM ONLY!  
Select your made-to-order meal and give to the Firefighters Burn Institute at the same time. 50% of your purchase will go back to the FFBI! MUST present flyer when ordering! Go to [www.ffburn.org](http://www.ffburn.org) to get the flyer!



### MAY 3-6 AMERICAN BURN ASSOCIATION 48<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING

Caesars Palace, Las Vegas With more than 75 sessions and 2,000 attendees, this meeting is the best opportunity to enhance knowledge on the latest scientific and practice advances in burn care. Virtually every aspect of the field is explored in this educational meeting: prevention, research, rehabilitation, treatment, administration and more. See [www.ameriburn.org](http://www.ameriburn.org) for details or to register.



### MAY 7 UCDAVIS FIRE 12<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL PANCAKE BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

UCD Fire Station 34, 625 Kleiber Hall Drive, Davis. Prepared by the UC Davis Student Resident Fire Fighters of Station 34. All proceeds go directly to the Firefighters Burn Institute. \$5 Pre-sale, \$7 at the door. Email [ucdfire@gmail.com](mailto:ucdfire@gmail.com) or come by Station 34 for tickets.



### JULY 17-23 FIREFIGHTERS KIDS CAMP

Camp Arroyo in Livermore, CA. **Now accepting applications for camp counselors!** Firefighters Kids Camp is a program held annually to benefit young burn survivors ages 6 to 17. A staff-to-camper ratio of 1:3 is provided to assure the needs and expectations of our campers are always met. Join the Fun! For more information, please contact Ka Vue at [ka@ffburn.org](mailto:ka@ffburn.org) or (916) 739-8525.



### JUNE 5 EL DORADO SALOON 6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

Empire Ranch Golf Club, 1620 East Natoma Street, Folsom. Shotgun start 8:00 AM. Includes cart and lunch on the deck. Raffle, drink specials and live music. Individual \$95, foursome \$380 (preferred). For more information call (916) 941-3600 or (310) 344-4603 or email: [acatcumings@gmail.com](mailto:acatcumings@gmail.com)



### JUNE 11 TOUGH MUDDER TAHOE 2016

South Lake Tahoe. Firefighters Burn Institute is proud to be an official charity partner. Are you tough enough? Ready to run already? Would you like to be a donor or spectator? For any questions, please contact Lisa at [lisa@ffburn.org](mailto:lisa@ffburn.org) or (916) 739-8525. To donate now, click here:

<https://www.crowdfunder.com/FirefightersBurnInstituteToughMudderTahoe/fundraiser/firefightersburninstitute>





### **JUNE 11 FAMILY HEALTH & SAFETY FAIR**

Safetyville USA Safety Center, 3909 Bradshaw Road, Sacramento  
10:00 AM – 3:00 PM Free event! Families attending will enjoy: Over 80 booths of community resources, Live Entertainment, Safety Demonstrations, Raffles, Free Giveaways & much more. Call (916) 438-3357 for more information.



### **JUNE 25 5th ANNUAL FIREFIGHTER'S "A TROPICAL AFFAIR"**

The best tropical event of the year is BACK! Come and enjoy an evening with Sacramento's finest restaurants, breweries and wineries! This outdoor event will be held in Sacramento, include live music entertainment, Hawaiian hula dancers, local celebrities as MCs, and a variety of foods and beverages provided by generous local business sponsors. Early Bird Special ticket price of \$40 is available now through March 31st. Get your tickets [here](#).



### **BUY A T-SHIRT TODAY!**

The Firefighters Burn Institute is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization founded by Sacramento Fire Captain Cliff Haskell and the Sacramento Area Firefighters Local 522 in 1973, for the purpose of establishing a local burn treatment facility; providing recovery programs for burn survivors; providing fire and burn prevention through public education; funding education for burn team professionals, firefighters, and burn survivors; and supporting burn treatment and rehabilitation research. Only \$25 each! Sizes: Youth Small through XXXL All funds raised will go directly to FIREFIGHTERS BURN INSTITUTE Order by checking the **Firefighters Burn Institute Facebook page** and linking directly to the ordering site