

Face Burns: Home Care

Your child has a burn injury to the face that you can care for at home. Read and follow these important instructions. Doing so will help your child's wound heal properly and prevent infection.

Burns to the face need special care to help them heal with little scarring. Cleaning your child's face will keep the wound clean, prevent an infection and help wound healing. You will clean your child's face two to four times each day and put an ointment on to keep the skin moist.

What supplies will I need?

- Clean washcloths. These are used to soak the burn wound and to wipe off old ointment.
- Warm tap water. Used to soak the burn wound.
- Antibiotic ointment. This will help the wound heal and prevent infection.

How do I clean my child's face?

Comb your child's hair back and use a barrette or band to keep your child's hair away from the face. The barrette or band should not be in contact with the burn.

1. Gather supplies.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water.
3. Moisten the washcloth with the tap water.
4. Check the wound for signs of infection:
 - Redness
 - Swelling
 - Bad smelling or green-colored drainage



Note: Old antibiotic ointment may look dry on the burn wound. This is normal and is not a sign of infection.

5. Put the moist washcloth on the burn wounds. Leave it on your child's face for 5 minutes.
6. After 5 minutes, use the washcloth to gently wipe off the old ointment and wound drainage. As you wash the wound, you may notice a thin, jelly-like layer come off of the wound. This is old ointment and some wound drainage. This **needs to come off for the wound to heal well**. It is normal.
7. Use your finger to spread a thin layer of antibiotic ointment over the wound. This prevents a scab from forming.
8. The burn must be kept moist. If the burn dries out between facial soaks, apply another thin layer of ointment.

Where do I get supplies for cleaning my child's face?

Antibiotic ointment can be purchased at a pharmacy.

What else can I do to help my child heal?

- Good nutrition will help your child's burns heal.
 - Have your child eat a healthy diet. Choose foods that are high in protein and calories.
 - Limit the amount of "junk" food your child eats. Avoid candy, chips and soda even though these foods often have higher calorie content.
 - Look at our **Nutrition for the Child with Burns Teaching Sheet** #1963.

ALERT: Call your child's doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child has:

- Signs of infection: redness, swelling, bad-smelling or green-colored drainage.
- A temperature over 101.2° F (38° C).
- No interest in eating or drinking or if your child is eating or drinking very little.
- Pain and/or itching that is not relieved by medicine.
- Special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

Or if you:

- Run out of medicine or dressing supplies for your child.
- Are not able to care for the burn at home.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.