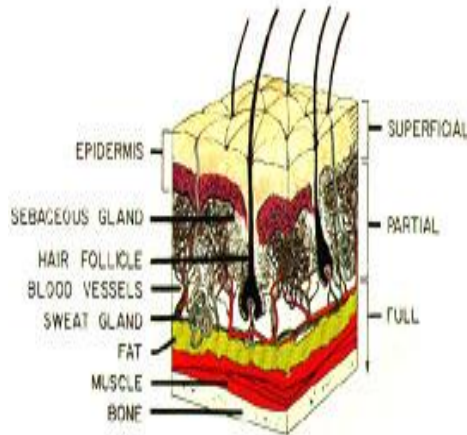


### Treatment of Burns



The skin, the largest organ of the body, consists of two layers—the epidermis and dermis. The depth or degree of burn depends on which layers of skin are damaged or destroyed. The epidermis is the outer layer that forms the protective covering. The thicker or inner layer of the dermis contains blood vessels, hair follicles, nerve endings, sweat and sebaceous glands. When the dermis is destroyed, so are the nerve endings that allow a person to feel pain, temperature, and tactile sensation.

The most important function of the skin is to act as a barrier against infection. The skin prevents loss of body fluids, thus preventing dehydration. The skin also regulates the body temperature by controlling the amount of evaporation of fluids from the sweat glands. The skin serves a cosmetic effect by giving the body shape. When the skin is burned, these functions are impaired or lost completely. The severity of the skin injury depends upon the size of the injury, depth of the wound, part of the body injured, age of the patient, and past medical history. Because of the importance of the skin, it becomes clear that

injury can be traumatic and life threatening. Recovery from burn injury involves four major aspects: burn wound management, physical therapy, nutrition, and emotional support. Treatment should begin immediately to cool the area of the burn. This will help alleviate pain. Use cool/normal water to cool the area for 15-30 minutes. Avoid ice or freezing the injured tissue. Be certain to maintain the victim's body temperature while treating the burn. Remove (DO NOT PEEL) any hot or burned clothing.

For deep partial-thickness burns or full-thickness burns, begin immediate plans to transport the victim to competent medical care. For any burn involving the face, hands, feet, or completely around an extremity, or deep burns; immediate medical care should be sought. Not all burns require immediate physician care but should be evaluated within 3-5 days.

Wash the area thoroughly with plain soap and water. Dry the area with a clean towel, DO NOT RUB with the towel. Treatment of blisters requires professional medical assistance. If immediate medical care is unavailable or unnecessary, antibiotic ointment may be applied after thorough cleaning and before the clean gauze dressing is applied.

If this newsletter has struck a chord, do write to us. Brickbats and bouquets to [murali.shanker@krystalallied.com](mailto:murali.shanker@krystalallied.com)

