UZ LEUVEN



Burn centre

information for parents

INTRODUCTION: WELCOME TO THE BURN CENTRE 3
Important practical arrangements
CARING FOR YOUR CHILD TOGETHER 5
Rooming-in
Isolation
Hygiene and tidiness in the room
Take part in care
WOUND CARE 9
Wound care without sedation
Wound care with sedation
Wound care with anaesthesia
A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM: FROM PLAY TO EDUCATION 12
MENTAL WELLBEING 13
Of the child
Of parents and family
GOING HOME 14
CONTACT 16
QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR OR NURSE 17

Introduction



Every year, many children suffer burn injuries that require a short stay in a burn centre. Young children are naturally eager to explore, which can expose them to potential dangers. An accident resulting in burn injuries can happen in a split second.

The severity of a burn injury is not always immediately clear. Sometimes we need some time to assess this properly. A burn injury may also continue to change in the early stages.

Our priority, as healthcare professionals in the burn centre, is to provide your child with the best possible care, while also supporting you and your family. As a parent or trusted care provider, you play a crucial role in your child's care and recovery. Your presence provides your child with a sense of safety and reassurance in what can be a new and frightening environment. That is why we want to involve you as much as possible in your child's care during their stay in the burn centre.

It's very important to prevent the burn injury from becoming infected. For this reason, the wound will be cleaned and treated almost every day. This can be painful. By keeping you well informed and explaining what to expect, we hope to reduce some of the fear and uncertainty surrounding the treatment.

Children often pick up on their parents' emotions and behaviour. If you remain calm, this can help your child feel safer and more at ease.

We understand that having your child admitted to hospital can also be an emotionally difficult time for you. That's why you and your family will be supported throughout the entire process by a care coordination team, including a psychologist, a social worker and a nursing care coordinator. They can provide emotional support and help you manage the practical aspects of family life while your child is in hospital.

To monitor the healing process properly, we regularly take photographs of the burn injury. You will have immediate access to these images via the *Mynexuzhealth* app. However, these photos can be confronting and do not necessarily indicate what the burn will look like in the long term. We therefore recommend viewing them only with guidance from a member of our team.

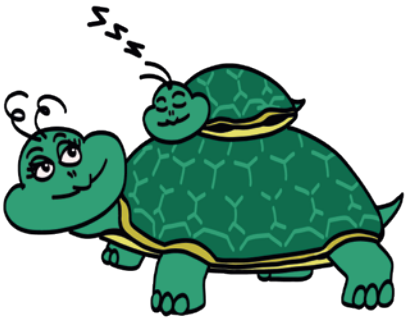
IMPORTANT PRACTICAL ARRANGEMENTS

- On admission, your child will receive a bracelet containing their personal details. Your child must wear this identification bracelet at all times. If the bracelet is damaged or unreadable, please inform the nurse. A new identification bracelet will be provided.
- Always let the nurse know when you leave the room.

CARING FOR YOUR CHILD TOGETHER

ROOMING-IN

Because your presence is important to your child, one parent may stay with them outside normal visiting hours. If your child's medical condition allows it, you may also stay overnight. This is known as rooming-in.



For safety reasons, only one adult may stay overnight with your child. This can be a parent or another trusted caregiver. Please let us know in advance who will be staying overnight.

Information about the costs of rooming-in is available at the registration desk in the central reception area at the East Entrance.

More information on the arrangements during your stay can be found at https://www.uzleuven.be/en/intensive-care-medicine/rooming-intensieve-zorg-8 or by scanning the QR code.

ISOLATION

Sometimes your child may need to be cared for in isolation. In that case, strict isolation measures apply to prevent bacteria from spreading from one patient to another.

If your child is being cared for in isolation, you should remain in the room as much as possible. If you need anything, please let a member of the nursing team know. A nurse will come to you as soon as possible.

Next to the room door, you'll find the isolation card with guidelines about:

- entering the room.
- which protective clothing visitors may need to wear and in what order.
- any restrictions for visitors who may be more vulnerable to infections, such as pregnant women.



HYGIENE AND TIDINESS IN THE ROOM

- ✔ We kindly ask your help to keep the room tidy.
- ✔ If your child needs to fast, make sure that there is no food in the room.
- ✔ A burn injury is particularly vulnerable to infection because the skin barrier has been damaged. Good hand hygiene is therefore very important. Regularly wash your hands and your child's hands thoroughly with soap and water. Use hand sanitizer as well, especially after using the toilet and before and after meals.
- ✔ We regularly take wound cultures by gently swabbing the wound with a fine swab. This allows us to closely monitor the amount of bacteria in the burn injury and detect any infection at an early stage.



TAKE PART IN CARE

Parents who stay overnight can take an active role in their child's care. The nurse will explain which aspects of care you can help with, such as:

- helping with personal hygiene such as washing and brushing teeth
- checking temperature
- giving medication
- helping your child with eating and drinking
- playing with your child and encouraging them to move
- cuddling and comforting your child
- keeping an eye on your child and letting the nursing team know if you notice any changes in their condition or pain
- …

We make sure that both you and your child have enough opportunities to rest. You can help your child by finding ways to distract and comfort them, and by offering small rewards, such as their favourite cuddly toy, a sticker or a small treat.

It is completely understandable to find this difficult as a parent. Your child's injury and hospital stay may bring up many different emotions, and you may not feel calm or positive all the time. That is okay. Be kind to yourself, and give yourself time to rest and process what is happening. Remember, simply being there for your child is already very valuable.



WOUND CARE

To create a calm and safe environment during wound care, we often use music and images playing softly in the background in the treatment room.

Most burn injuries are painful. Effective pain relief is therefore important before, during and after wound care. The nurse and the doctor continuously assess your child's pain and determine what is needed. This may include additional medication, tools to reduce anxiety or, if necessary, anaesthesia.

Depending on how the burn injury heals, the timing and type of wound care may vary. Wound care may take place either in your child's room or, if necessary, in the bathroom. We will clearly explain beforehand what will happen and what you can expect.

If you wish, you can help distract and comfort your child during wound care. We understand that this is not always easy, and you are never required to be present or take part. We will discuss this with you beforehand.

To help keep the environment calm and focused, we preferably have only one parent present during wound care. You can decide which parent will be there.

In some situations, it may not be possible for you to be present during wound care. You can still play an important role in your child's care at other times, and your involvement remains just as valuable.

A physiotherapist is involved in most wound care sessions. They closely monitor your child's mobility, particularly when the burn affects a joint, such as the hand or foot.

The burns surgeon will see your child regularly to monitor the healing process. If the wound is not healing as expected, surgery may be necessary. If this is the case, the surgeon will explain the procedure and provide you with detailed information.

Wound care without sedation

We give your child pain medication well in advance. Your child will remain awake throughout the procedure, and distraction is usually enough to help them cope. Your child does not need to fast beforehand.

Wound care with sedation

If your child is very anxious, if wound care takes a long time, or if the procedure is particularly distressing for your child, we may give medication to help them relax. This is called sedation. The medication can be given through an IV, by mouth or rectally. Your child will remain awake during the procedure but may not remember it afterwards. We will let you know in advance if your child needs to fast.

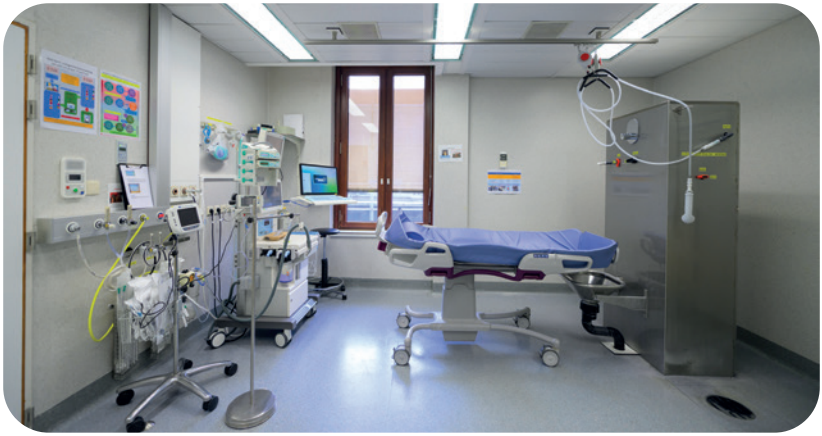
After wound care, we ask that you help keep the room calm and quiet. Your child will be observed and monitored for a while afterwards. The doctor will let you know when your child can start drinking and eating again.

Wound care with anaesthesia

Sometimes wound care needs to be carried out under general anaesthesia. In this case, your child will need to fast, which means they cannot eat or drink for a certain period before the procedure. The nurse will explain the fasting instructions to you in advance.

Wound care under general anaesthesia takes place in the large bathroom of the burn centre, which is fully equipped to carry out the procedure safely. You can stay with your child until they fall asleep. The anaesthetist will help your child fall asleep using a mask through which they breathe in anaesthetic gas. Additional medication will be given through an IV. Once your child is asleep, we will ask you to leave the bathroom.

After the procedure, your child will wake up in a calm environment while we continue to monitor them. The doctor will let you know when your child can start drinking and eating again.

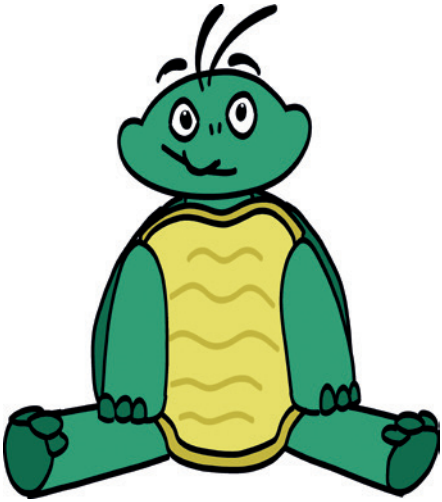


A MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAM: FROM PLAY TO EDUCATION

Your child's care involves more than just doctors and nurses. Our team includes healthcare professionals from a range of different disciplines, including physiotherapists, dietitians, teachers from the hospital school, social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists and play specialists. Together, they provide care and support tailored to your child's individual needs.

You may also meet a volunteer who is familiar with our burn centre and the care we provide.

If you would like some time for yourself, you can ask the volunteer to stay with your child while you take a walk or have a short break. This can give you some valuable time to rest and recharge.



MENTAL WELLBEING

OF THE CHILD

Being in hospital can be a distressing experience for children, and it is therefore common for them to feel anxious. Depending on their age, children may not always find it easy to express how they are feeling.

As a parent, you play an important role in supporting your child through this difficult time, which can bring many different emotions. Your familiar presence can provide comfort and reassurance and can make a real difference to your child's recovery. As a team, we will support and guide you and your child as much as possible.

Some children may experience emotional difficulties during their hospital stay or after returning home. For some children, things such as ongoing itching, scarring or restricted movement can make this more difficult. Every child responds differently to a burn injury, and their age and stage of development can also influence how they cope. If your child is struggling, our psychologist is available to listen, provide support and help you and your child through this process.

OF PARENTS AND FAMILY

A child's admission to the burn centre can also be emotionally difficult for parents and other family members. As a parent, seeing your child in pain can be particularly hard, and it is not uncommon to experience feelings of guilt. Please remember that these feelings are understandable. Our team is here to support and guide you throughout this difficult time.

GOING HOME



When the team feels that your child is ready to go home, we will let you know in good time so that you can make the necessary practical arrangements. Our care coordinator or social worker can help you with this, so please do not hesitate to ask for support.

Before you go home, the team will explain the specific care your child will need after a burn injury. This will help you feel confident and well prepared to continue your child's care at home. Most superficial burns heal within two to three weeks and do not leave permanent scars when the recommended aftercare is followed correctly.

When your child is discharged, you will receive written information about their medication and the schedule for follow-up appointments. If needed, we can also arrange nursing care at home.

Before you go home, our psychologist will talk to you about how to support your child if you notice temporary changes in their behaviour, as well as how to support brothers and sisters with their emotions. If feelings of guilt continue, you can always reach out for further support.

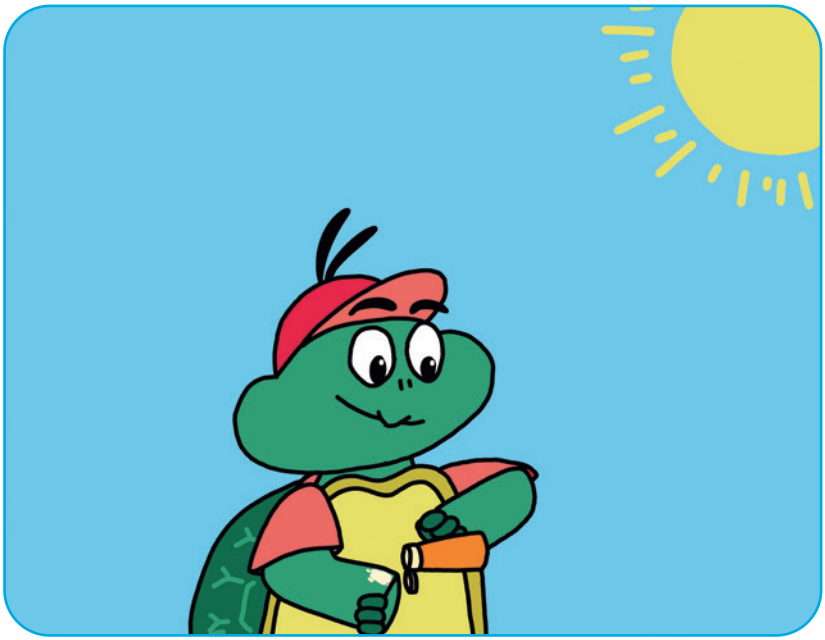
More information about follow-up and the necessary aftercare after discharge can be found in the brochures *Burns: outpatient follow-up* and *Burns: treatment and aftercare*.

Both brochures are available on https://www.uzleuven.be/en/intensieve-zorg-8, by scanning the QR code or by asking for them at the burn centre.

In some cases, we will schedule follow-up appointments.
A multidisciplinary follow-up appointment may be arranged to monitor the development of scars after a burn injury.

Most children recover well from a burn injury through their normal activities and play. Some children may benefit from additional support from a physiotherapist. Depending on the extent and severity of the burns, specialized rehabilitation may also be needed. The doctor and physiotherapist will discuss this with you in good time.

For school-age children with more severe burns or scarring, we can also provide support with returning to school if needed.



CONTACT

For questions or problems you can contact the burn centre **night and day** by telephone:

- tel. 016 34 87 50
- tel. 016 34 87 56
- tel. 016 34 87 52

Contacts

- Nursing care coordination — tel. 016 34 11 25
  zorgcoordinatie.brandwonden@uzleuven.be
- Doctors
  Burn intensive care specialist — tel. 016 34 40 17
  Burns surgeon — tel. 016 34 87 21
- Social worker — tel. 016 34 86 20
- Psychologist care coordination — tel. 016 34 17 94
- Physiotherapists — tel. 016 34 05 61
- Pressure garments - VIGO
  tel. 016 34 07 55

You can find our full team, including names and photos, at https://www.uzleuven.be/en/intensieve-zorg-8.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR OR NURSE



QUESTIONS FOR YOUR DOCTOR OR NURSE

© November 2026 UZ Leuven
Duplication of this text and these illustrations shall always be subject to prior approval of the UZ Leuven Communications department.

Design and Production
This text was composed by the burn centre team in conjunction with the Communications department.

This brochure is also available at www.uzleuven.be/en/brochure/701822.

Comments or suggestions pertaining to this brochure can be submitted via communicatie@uzleuven.be.

mynexuzhealth

Consult your medical record via nexuzhealth.com or download the app.

GET IT ON Google Play

Download on the App Store

Published by
UZ Leuven
Herestraat 49
3000 Leuven
tel. 016 33 22 11
www.uzleuven.be

FSC www.fsc.org
MIX
Papier | Ondersteunt verantwoord bosbeheer
FSC® C008364

701822_v112026