

# Burns Dressing - Acticoat™

Burns are a common presentation to the emergency department. It is important that the correct dressings are utilised when managing a burn. All burns must be cleansed prior to dressing. Please see the [Burn Cleansing Skill Sheet](#) for more information on cleaning regimes. Ensure that the appropriate comfort measures are planned for and utilised prior to commencing any burns dressing. This might include pharmacological and non-pharmacological interventions. Remember to check for allergies prior to commencement. Acticoat™ is a common product made by Smith and Nephew that is utilised for the paediatric population. Acticoat 3™ lasts 3 days whereas the Acticoat 7™ product lasts 7 days. Please also consider the manufacturers instructions.

This skill sheet is based on the recommendation of the Queensland Children's Hospital Burns Service. There may be slight variations in practice, depending on factors that influence burns care at each site. Please refer to your local tertiary burns service for more information. For sites Mackay and north this will be Townsville University Hospital. For the Gold Coast, this will be Gold Coast University Hospital.

## 1 GATHER

Ensure you have the correct dressing for the duration required.



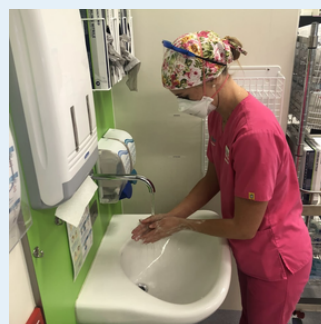
## 2 PREPARE

Ensure that the Acticoat™ and Mepitel® dressing packets are intact and not expired.



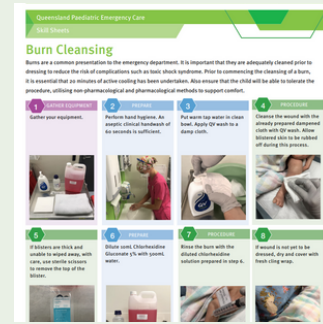
## 3

Perform hand hygiene and don gloves. An aseptic clinical handwash of 60 seconds is sufficient.



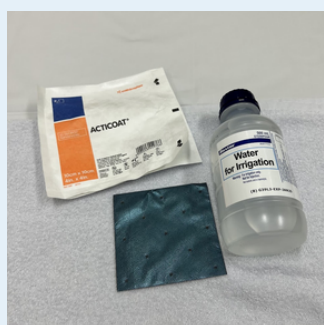
## 4 PROCEDURE

Cleanse the wound as per the [Burn Cleansing Skill Sheet](#). Consider whether clinical photos of the burn are required.



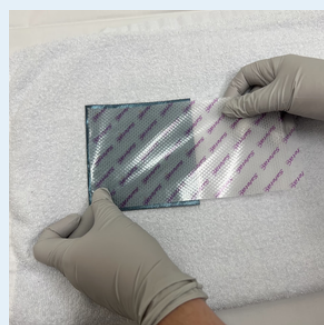
## 5 PREPARE

Open Acticoat™ and wet with water for irrigation. DO NOT use normal saline.



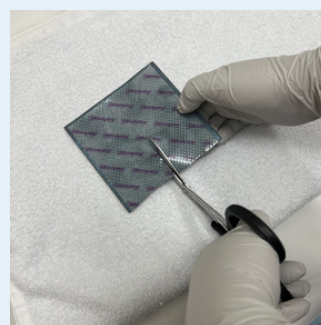
## 6

Remove the plastic from one side of the Mepitel® and place on the blue side of the Acticoat™.



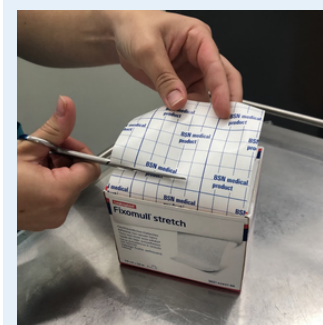
## 7

Cut the Acticoat™ and Mepitel® to size to cover the burn, leaving at least 1cm overhang outside of the burn area.



## 8

Cut non-woven adhesive tape to size.



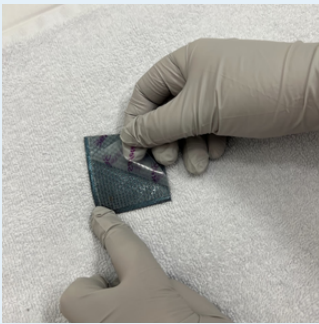


**ALERT**

Only prepare Acticoat™ dressing immediately prior to attending burn care as this maintains the integrity of the product.

9

Remove the remaining plastic from the other side of the Mepitel®.



10 PROCEDURE

Place dressing on the burn, with the Mepitel® in direct contact with the burn. Remember: "BLUE to BURN, SILVER to SKY".



11

Ensure that all the Mepitel® and Acticoat™ combination is secured and covered by the non-woven adhesive tape.



12

Add a Melolin™ dressing to absorb ooze and apply non-adherent side to patient.



13

Ensure all dressings are covered with non-adhesive woven tape.



14

Cover with tubular bandage if the burn located on a limb. Ensure it is sized appropriately and not too tight.



**Tips**

- If the patient has presented within 24 hours of burn incident, an irrigation port is no longer recommended as there will be adequate moisture within the wound bed.
- Refer to local burns team for advice for patients presenting after 24 hours post burn incident.



**ALERT**

Refer to your local policy for guidance on monitoring requirements during procedures.



## Education

Ensure that the carer goes home with an [Acticoat™](#) (QH only) fact sheet. The fact sheet and care instructions should be explained prior to discharge.

Key points:

- Dressing to remain dry - do not wet during bathing
- Child is not to go near sand, dirt or water
- Signs of toxic shock syndrome: carers are to return to hospital for review promptly if any fevers, rash, uncontrolled pain or irritability, diarrhoea, vomiting or decreased oral intake

## Documentation

Adequate documentation must be completed to allow for other clinicians to plan for future dressing changes. It should include documentation of:

- Appearance and location of burn
- Analgesia or procedural sedation utilised and its efficacy
- Distraction type utilised
- Cleansing process used
- If debridement or blister de-roofing required
- Type of dressing used
- Education provided to carer

## Referral & Follow Up

All burns in paediatric patients must be followed up by the relevant paediatric burns service. Ensure a referral is made prior to discharging the patient.

Please contact the Surgical/Burns Registrar via hospital switchboard for each referring health service along with photos and referral to the below email addresses:

- For sites inclusive of and north of Mackay, contact Townsville University Hospital at [BurnsNQ@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:BurnsNQ@health.qld.gov.au)
- For sites inclusive of and south of the Gold Coast, contact Gold Coast University Hospital at [GCHChildburns@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:GCHChildburns@health.qld.gov.au) and complete Blue Slip referral form
- For all other sites, contact Queensland Children's Hospital at [CHQ\\_QCHburns@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:CHQ_QCHburns@health.qld.gov.au)

### For further information:

[Skill Sheet: Burn Cleansing](#)

[Skill Sheet: Burns Dressing - Hands](#)

[Video: Burn Cleansing](#)

[Video: Burns Dressing - Acticoat™](#)



## References:

This Queensland Paediatric Skill Sheet was developed by the Emergency Care of Children working group (funded by the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel) with the help of the following resources:

Children's Health Queensland. (2025, January 16). Burns - Acticoat™ Dressing. Accessed 19 March 2025 from [https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0026/722933/ns\\_o6811.pdf\\_nocache](https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0026/722933/ns_o6811.pdf_nocache)

Children's Health Queensland. (2024, March 19). Management of a paediatric burn patient. Accessed 19 March 2025 from <https://www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/PDF/guidelines/gdl-paediatric-burns.pdf>

Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service. (2024, March 15). Paediatric Burns Referral and Management. Accessed 19 March 2025 from <https://gchweb.sth.health.qld.gov.au/documents/GL1949>

Molnlycke Health Care AB. (2025). Mepitel®. Accessed 19 March 2025 from <https://www.molnlycke.com.au/products-solutions/mepitel/>

Smith + Nephew. (n.d.). Acticoat. Accessed 19 March 2025 from <https://www.smith-nephew.com/en-au/health-care-professionals/products/advanced-wound-management/acticoat-global#application>

Smith + Nephew. (n.d.). Melolin. Accessed 19 March 2025 from <https://www.smith-nephew.com/en/health-care-professionals/products/advanced-wound-management/melolin-ppl#reference-materials>

**This Queensland Paediatric Emergency Skill Sheet was developed and revised by the Emergency Care of Children working group. Initial work was funded by the Queensland Emergency Department Strategic Advisory Panel.**

## Skill Sheet Disclaimer

The information contained in these Queensland Paediatric Emergency Care skill sheets is for information purposes only. It was developed to inform emergency nursing care, but can also be applied by other clinicians acting within their scope of practice. The information has been prepared using a multidisciplinary approach with reference to the best information and evidence available at the time of preparation. No representation, warranty or assurance is given that the information is entirely complete, current, or accurate in every respect. The skill sheets are not a substitute for clinical judgement, knowledge and expertise, or medical advice. Variation from the skill sheets, taking into account individual circumstances may be appropriate. This does not address all elements of standard practice and accepts that individual clinicians are responsible for the following:

- Providing care within the context of locally available resources, expertise, and scope of practice.
- Supporting consumer rights and informed decision making in partnership with healthcare practitioners including the right to decline intervention or ongoing management.

- Advising consumers of their choices in an environment that is culturally appropriate and which enables comfortable and confidential discussion. This includes the use of interpreter services where necessary.
- Ensuring informed consent is obtained prior to delivering care.
- Meeting all legislative requirements and professional standards.
- Applying standard precautions, and additional precautions as necessary, when delivering care.
- Documenting all care in accordance with mandatory and local requirements.

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