

SKIN GRAFTING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

It is Possible to Recover from Burns Comprising of More Than 90 % of the Body

Skin that is Severely Damaged Heals by Forming Scar Tissue

As with any surgery skin grafting comes with risks, but the results can help transform a body in recovery. The procedure is relatively simple and is minimally invasive.

Please use this guide as a resource for knowledge and understanding of what skin grafts are, why you need them, how to prepare for it, types of skin grafts and standard procedure of the surgery.

01 | What and Why?

Skin grafting is a surgical procedure that involves removing the skin from one area of the body and moving it, or transplanting it, to a different area of the body. This surgery may be done on any part of the body has lost its protective covering of skin due to burns, injury, or illness. A skin graft is placed over an area of the body where skin has been lost. Common reasons for a skin graft include:

- skin infections
- deep burns
- large, open wounds
- bed sores or other ulcers on the skin that haven't healed well

02 | Procedure: What to Expect

Skin grafting procedures are normally scheduled in advance in order to allow the patient time to prepare for surgery. As with other surgical procedures, fasting is required when anesthesia is administered. Also a care taker will be needed to assist post-surgery.

The procedure will involve the removal of skin from the donor site. The depth of removal will be dependent on the type of grafting needed and also on the health, risk and patient tolerance. Once removed the skin graft will be placed on the transplant area with surgical dressings and/or sutures to ensure sterile and avoid movement of the transplant.

03 | Types of Skin Grafts

There are two basic types of skin grafts: split-level thickness and full-thickness grafts.

A split-level thickness graft involves the removal of the top two layers of skin, the epidermis and the dermis. These layers are taken from the donor site, which is the area where the healthy skin is located. Split-level thickness grafts are used to cover large areas. These grafts tend to be fragile and typically have a shiny or smooth appearance. They may also appear paler than the adjoining skin. Split-level grafts don't grow with the rest of the skin, so children who get them may need additional grafts as they grow older.

A full-thickness graft involves the removal of the muscles and blood vessels in addition to the top two layers of skin from the donor site. Full-thickness grafts are generally used for small wounds on highly visible parts of the body, such as the face. Unlike split-level thickness grafts, full-thickness grafts blend in well with the skin around them and usually grow with the person.

For more information on skin grafting and other ambulatory surgeries please visit:

<http://www.ascassociation.org/>

*Did You Know?
4,500 people die from
burns each year*

References

<http://www.healthline.com/health/skin-graft#Overview1>

<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/002982.htm>