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Policy Area Infection Prevention
Applicability UNC Medical Center

Burn Center

I. Description

This policy describes the infection prevention practices specific to the Burn Center to reduce the risk of infection for patients and staff

II. Policy

A. Personnel

1. Dress Code

- Burn ICU staff will wear hospital-laundered scrubs and adhere to guidelines in the Perioperative Services policy: [Perioperative Services Surgical Attire](#).

2. Hand Hygiene

- Hand hygiene will be performed by all persons entering and exiting the Burn Center in accordance with the Infection Prevention policy: [Hand Hygiene](#).

B. Isolation Precautions

1. Refer to the Infection Prevention policy: [Isolation Precautions](#) for guidance related to patients on isolation precautions.
2. A fluid impermeable gown and gloves are used when there is risk of splash, splatter, or contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials or non-intact skin. Refer to

the Infection Prevention policy: [Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens](#).

- a. Select a gown that is appropriate for the activity and amount of fluid likely to be encountered. Waterproof gowns are available for use (e.g., blue gown).
- b. Staff workers will wear a protective gown and gloves when holding a baby with draining wounds and/or dressings that are not completely dry/intact. Afterwards the gown will be removed and hand hygiene performed.
- c. When holding a baby, a protective barrier will be used on the shoulder to prevent oral secretions from contaminating the scrubs. Afterwards the barrier will be changed/discarded and hand hygiene performed.
- d. No live plants or flowers are permitted within the room of the Burn ICU to avoid potential exposure.

C. Patient Supplies

1. Refer to the Infection Prevention policy: [Infection Prevention Guidelines for Safe Patient Care](#) regarding use of and storage of patient care supplies.
2. Fans are prohibited in clinical areas, with the only exception of life-threatening heat stroke or comfort care.

D. Ancillary Services

1. Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy
 - a. Applicable guidelines as outlined in the Infection Prevention policy: [Rehabilitation Therapies](#) will be followed in addition to those of this policy.
 - b. Patients on Contact and/or Enteric Precautions may be brought to the PT/OT gym for daily exercise and therapy. These patients will be treated one at a time and ideally scheduled to be seen at the end of the day. All equipment will be cleaned with an EPA-registered disinfectant (e.g., MetriGuard, Sani-Cloth) prior to allowing the room to be used by another patient.
 - c. Hydrocollator tanks are disinfected and maintained per manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU).
 - Wrap hydrocollator hot packs per MIFU or with a clean pillowcase or towel if not specified.
 - d. Paraffin bath should not be used on the hands of patients with non-intact skin. Equipment is **disinfected** and maintained per MIFU.
2. Recreational Therapy
 - a. Applicable guidelines in the Infection Prevention policy: [Pediatric Play Facilities and Child Life](#) will be followed in addition to those of this policy.

- b. Any used recreation equipment should be placed in the designated bin in the Soiled Utility Room for cleaning by Recreational Therapy.

NOTE: Patients on Contact and/or Enteric Precautions may be taken to the Burn Center playroom. These patients will be seen one at a time. All equipment and furniture used by the patient will be cleaned with an EPA-registered disinfectant prior to the room being used by other patients, families or staff. Toys must be cleaned as outlined in the Infection Prevention policy: Diversional Supplies (e.g., toys and books) .
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E. Visitors

1. All visitors must follow the Nursing policy: [Hospital Visitation](#).
2. Persons with communicable diseases should not visit patients.
3. Visitors will perform hand hygiene with an antimicrobial agent before entering and leaving patient care areas.
4. If the patient requires isolation, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is encouraged to be used by visitors and may be required under certain circumstances.
5. Visitors will gain entrance to the Burn ICU only through the front door by the entrance to the Administrative Offices. The back door to the Burn ICU (next to the elevators) will be used only by hospital staff.

F. Equipment Cleaning

Refer to the Infection Prevention policy: [Infection Prevention Guidelines for Safe Patient Care](#) for additional guidance.

G. Soiled Linen

- Staff should adhere to guidelines in the Infection Prevention policies: [Laundry and Linen Service](#) and [Infection Prevention Guidelines for Safe Patient Care](#).

H. Hydrotherapy

Hydrotherapy is provided within the unit to reduce the risk of cross infection and contamination to patients who are not burn patients. Principles of clean technique and patient isolation are extended to the hydrotherapy rooms. When the patient enters the hydrotherapy room materials and objects the patient comes in contact with are considered contaminated.

1. Soiled dressings are disposed of in a trash receptacle. These dressings may be removed in the hydrotherapy room or patient room. Trash is removed from the patient's room after the dressing change and immediately from the hydrotherapy room if the trash bag is wet or soiled. Otherwise, trash is collected at the end of the shift.

2. The patient is transported to the hydrotherapy between two clean sheets or a sheet and the plastic covering the stretcher.
3. The hydrotherapy room must be cleaned between patients after completion of all daily wound care.
4. Privacy curtains in anterooms and the hydrotherapy room doors should remain closed during all wound care procedures.
5. Privacy curtains will be changed when visibly soiled and according to the timer - strip indicator.
6. Whenever possible, patients colonized or infected with multidrug-resistant organisms are the last to receive hydrotherapy each day. Patients on Contact Precautions needing hydrotherapy should be transported following the policy outlined in the Infection Prevention policy: [Isolation Precautions](#).
7. Only equipment and supplies needed for the patient receiving therapy are opened during the treatment period. All used or opened items are discarded and/or removed for disinfection before the room is cleaned and the next patient enters.
8. The stretcher used to transport the patient to and from the hydrotherapy room is cleaned with an EPA-registered disinfectant prior to and after transport. Clean sheets are applied after cleaning and dirty linen is placed directly in the linen hamper after patient use.
9. Staff must wear a fluid impermeable gown and clean gloves when working with patients who have open wounds. Hair must be pulled away from the face and confined within a disposable bouffant during wound care. Standard Precautions must be practiced for all patients. If gowns become wet/soiled during bath, change before continuing.
10. Hydrotherapy Room Cleaning
 - a. Environmental Services staff mop and clean hydrotherapy rooms every afternoon after wound care is completed and clean all horizontal surfaces (except hydrotherapy equipment, which is cleaned by Burn Center staff) with an EPA-registered disinfectant daily and as needed. This includes shelves, blanket warmers, supply carts, stereo, and monitors. Supply carts/shelves in the hydrotherapy room require daily damp cleaning of exterior surfaces.
 - b. Hydrotherapy equipment is cleaned by Burn Center staff with appropriate disinfectant solution prior to the first patient's wound care, between each patient, and after the final patient of the day.
 - c. Clean plastic disposable equipment liners are used for each patient.
 - d. All opened, unused supplies for each patient are considered contaminated and must be discarded at the completion of hydrotherapy procedures.

- e. The rooms and equipment should remain clean and dry when not in use.
- f. Hoses are flushed for a minute prior to use.
- g. Contaminated gowns and gloves are to be removed and disposed of in the hydrotherapy rooms. Clean gowns and gloves will then be put on for transfer of the patient to his/her room for dressings.
- h. The hydrotherapy drain in the floor will be cleaned monthly by pouring a gallon of bleach in the drain.
- i. The hydrotherapy hoses and nozzles will be changed every six months.

I. Waste Disposal

Waste disposal is performed according to the Infection Prevention policy: [Guidelines for Disposal of Regulated Medical Waste](#).

J. Environmental Services

Housekeeping responsibilities can be found in the Infection Prevention policy: [Environmental Services](#) and in the protocols of the Environmental Services Department.

III. Implementation

The implementation of this policy and the responsibility for enforcing it will be up to the Director of the Burn Center or their delegate(s) and the Nursing Supervisor or their delegate(s).

IV. Related Policies

[Infection Prevention Policy: Diversional Supplies](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Environmental Services](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Exposure Control Plan for Bloodborne Pathogens](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Guidelines for Disposal of Regulated Medical Waste](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Hand Hygiene and Use of Antiseptics for Skin Preparation](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Infection Prevention Guidelines for Safe Patient Care](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Isolation Precautions](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Laundry and Linen Service](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Pediatric Play Facilities and Child Life](#)

[Infection Prevention Policy: Rehabilitation Therapies](#)

[Nursing Policy: Hospital Visitation](#)

[Perioperative Services Policy: Perioperative Services Surgical Attire](#)

V. Responsible for Content

Infection Prevention

All Revision Dates

12/2025, 05/2023, 01/2023, 04/2021, 01/2020, 06/2017, 12/2016, 05/2014, 04/2011, 07/2008, 04/2006, 03/2004

Approval Signatures

Step Description	Approver	Date
Policy Stat Administrator	Judith Strubin: Mgr Program-IP	12/2025
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	Sherie Goldbach: Project Coordinator	12/2025

Applicability

UNC Medical Center

Standards

No standards are associated with this document