

- Praise the child for cooperation.

Outer dressings are removed first. Any dressings that have adhered to the burn can be more easily removed by applying tepid water or normal saline. Loose or easily detached tissue is debrided during the cleansing process. In dressing the burn, it is important that all areas be clean, that medication be amply applied, and that no two burned surfaces touch each other (e.g., fingers or toes; ears touching the side of the head). If they are touching, the burned surfaces will heal together, causing deformity or dysfunction.

Topical medications may be applied directly to the burn with a tongue blade or gloved hand as well as using impregnated fine-mesh gauze. All dressings applied circumferentially should be wrapped in a distal-to-proximal manner. The dressing is applied with sufficient tension to remain in place but not so tightly as to impair circulation or limit motion. An elastic net is then applied to secure the dressing in place. A stable dressing is especially important when the child is ambulatory.

Standard precautions, including the use of protective garb and barrier techniques, should be followed when caring for patients with burns. Frequent hand and forearm washing is the single most important element of the infection control program. Strict policies for cleaning the environment and patient care equipment should be implemented to minimize the risk of cross-contamination. All visitors and members of other departments should be oriented to the infection control policies, including the importance of hand and forearm washing and use of protective garb. Visitors should be screened for infection and contagious diseases before patient contact.

## **Prevention of Complications**

### **Acute Care**

The maintenance of body temperature is important to children with burns. Core body temperature is supported when energy is conserved with an environmental temperature of 28° to 33° C (82.4° to 91.4° F). Large areas of the body should not be exposed simultaneously during dressing changes. Warmed solutions, linens, occlusive dressings, heat shields, a radiant warmer, and warming