

children with burns ([Meyer, Wiechman, Woodson, et al, 2012](#)). The oral form of fentanyl, Oralet, provides effective analgesia in a convenient form that children can suck. Dosage monitoring is important because tolerance to opioids may develop.

The use of short-acting anesthetic agents, such as propofol (Diprivan) and nitrous oxide, has proved beneficial in eliminating procedural pain. Pharyngeal reflexes remain intact, thus ensuring a patent airway. Propofol is an IV sedative hypnotic agent that produces sedation in less than 1 minute and lasts only a few minutes. For any conscious or unconscious sedation, the child must be monitored continuously during the procedure (see [Preoperative Care, Chapter 20](#) and [Pain, Chapter 5](#)).

Management of the burn wound.

After the initial period of burn shock and the restoration of fluid balance, the primary concern is the burn itself. The objectives of burn management include prevention of infection, removal of devitalized tissue, and closure of the burn. The application of dressings and topical antimicrobial therapy reduce pain by minimizing the exposure to air.

Primary excision.

In children with large, full-thickness burns, excision is performed as soon as the patient is hemodynamically stable after initial resuscitation. Because the burn wound precipitates an exaggerated physiologic response, many complications do not resolve until the eschar is excised and the wound is closed. Early excision of deep partial- and full-thickness burns reduces the incidence of infection and the threat of sepsis.

Debridement.

Partial-thickness burns require debridement of devitalized tissue to promote healing. Debridement is painful and requires analgesia and a sedative before the procedure. IV analgesics are most effective when they are administered just before the onset of procedural pain ([Meyer, Wiechman, Woodson, et al, 2012](#)). Medications given for pain need to be readily available during this procedure and may need to be titrated up during the procedure.

Hydrotherapy is used to cleanse the burn and involves either