

NTBRMS NEWS

North Texas Burn Rehabilitation Model System

Spring 2014

SPRING 2014

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"It is a big relief to have this clinic. Dallas is too far, I have no car. Thank God for this clinic."
 -Anonymous, NTBRMS Survey Response

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Reaching out across Texas

by Amanda Tollar, B.A.
 Radha Holavanahalli, Ph.D.

Burn survivors living in the East Texas region find convenient access to health care and emotional support at the Tyler Burn Clinic

Burn survivors who live in East Texas attend the quarterly clinic held at East Texas Medical Center in Tyler (approximately 200 miles east of Dallas). The Tyler Burn Clinic is supported by funds from the North Texas Burn Rehabilitation Model System (NTBRMS) grant sponsored by the National Institute on Disability Research and Rehabilitation (NIDRR). The purpose of this clinic is to provide medical examinations and burn rehabilitation follow-up care for patients who would not otherwise receive treatment due to transportation constraints and financial burden.



The clinic is attended by a UT Southwestern Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation physician and one burn surgeon in addition to NTBRMS research staff.

During the NTBRMS grant cycle from 2007 to 2012, the Tyler burn clinic provided care for an average of 17 patients per quarter, with a range of 9

to 24 patients. Our annual average number of patients seen in the Tyler Burn Clinic was 53, with an overall total of 317 burn patients seen for clinic appointments during the five-year grant cycle.

In an effort to assess the needs of the burn patients who receive care at the Tyler Burn Clinic we conducted a satisfaction survey (ongoing since 2005). We received a total of 328 responses. The survey consists of nine questions on measures of convenience, cost, and satisfaction with treatment. *(Continued on pg.4)*

Summary of Survey Findings from the Tyler Burn Clinic:

- 98% of patients find the clinic more convenient
- 97% of patients feel that the clinic is less time consuming
- 93% of patients report that the clinic is less expensive
- 81% of patients feel the medical examination and feedback in Tyler is the same as care received in Dallas
- 84% of patients would not ignore a medical problem due to distance from a burn clinic, however, 15% have ignored a problem and did not attend clinic because their appointment was in Dallas instead of Tyler
- 83% of patients are "Very Satisfied" or "Satisfied" with having the clinic

***I am not what
happened to me.
I am what I choose
to become.
– Carl Jung***

**Phoenix Society
Website**

<http://www.phoenix-society.org/>



Ask the Expert

Dr. Kimberly Roaten: "Am I depressed or just sad?"

We started off this year's Burn Survivor Support Group with Dr. Roaten, a psychologist in the Department of Psychiatry at UT Southwestern Medical Center. Her presentation focused on understanding the differences between depression and sadness.

Depression is a mental illness that affects your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. Depression, unlike sadness, lasts at least two weeks and causes negative impacts on relationships along with one's physical recovery. Other symptoms related to depression include losing interest, changes in your sleep, having low to no energy, feeling slowed down, and/or feeling hopeless or having thoughts of death/suicide.

To deal with depression or sadness, Dr. Roaten advised patients and their families to do something to make you feel better.

A few examples include:

- * exercising
- * leaving the house
- * socializing with positive people,
- * developing a consistent sleep schedule
- * coming to the support group
- * finding resources on the Phoenix Society website



If these options do not work for you, there are alternatives. Talking to your doctor, seeing a counselor or psychologist, medication, and/or talking to your friends and family are just a few other options.

If you are having serious thoughts about hurting yourself, go to the emergency room or contact the crisis hotline at 972 -233-2233. Extra information about Depression can be found at <http://www.msktc.org/burn/factsheets/Psychological-Distress-After-Burn-Injury> .

“Itching is a normal part of healing... itching decreases over time “
- MSKTC Itchy Skin After Burn Injury

Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC)

www.msktc.org



Ask the Expert

Dr. Karen Kowalske: “Why do I itch & What do I do about it?”

Our guest speaker for the month of February was Dr. Kowalske, Professor in the Department of Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation at UT Southwestern. Her talk focused on itchy skin due to a burn injury and ways to deal with it. Many people recovering from a burn injury will experience itching on or around the burn, graft, or donor site as it is part of the healing process. A lack of oil glands in the scar tissue from burns makes the skin dry which leads to itching.

Dr. Kowalske assured the audience that itching decreases over time and referenced treatments to reduce itching. Topical treatments, applied to the skin, will keep the skin moisturized and allow it to stay hydrated.

Topical treatments include :

- Unscented lotions
- Capsaicin (which should be tested on skin first as it may cause a mild burning sensation)
- Creams with diphenhydramine (DPH or DHM)
- Doxepin cream (Zonalon or Prudoxin)

Oral medications with antihistamines such as Benadryl and sleep medications with doxepin help to block histamines, a naturally occurring compound in the human body, which cause an inflammatory response. They are also suggested to make for a better nights rest. Wearing appropriate clothing to protect your skin from the sun along with using unscented laundry detergent and sunscreen will aid in reducing itching.

Don't let itching get in the way of living your life. Developing a treatment that works best for you in reducing itching can reduce anxiety and stress related to your burn scar. The information Dr. Kowalske presented at the Burn Survivor Support Group meeting can be found on the Itchy Skin after Burn Injury Factsheet on the Model Systems Knowledge Translation Center (MSKTC) website.

(continued from pg. 1)
“Doctors and staff cared for me well. They probably saved me from lots of complications.”

The Tyler Burn Clinic is also supported by Alan Goss, a Survivors Offering Assistance in Recovery (SOAR) -trained burn survivor. Alan is a Tyler-area resident and ETMC volunteer who helps the clinic staff in greeting patients and assisting the patients and families in filling

out required paperwork.

Alan uses his time with burn survivors and their families to serve as a resource on thriving after burn injury. Patients and their family members often ask questions about the burn recovery process in an informal way. Alan answers their questions in a personal manner and supports the medical team. Our patients and family members report that having Alan speak with them

is very encouraging and helpful.

Having a SOAR-trained burn survivor serve in a clinical setting is a great asset to the burn team by providing comprehensive emotional support to patients and their families. ☀

If you live in the East Texas area and would like more information about the Tyler Burn Clinic, please call our offices at: 214-648-9534.

CAMP I-THONKA-CHI

SAVE THE DATE

BURN CAMP

Get ready for fun!

**June 1 – June 6
2014**

For more information call:

214.590.2920

www.parklandburncamp.org



NTBRMS Personnel

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Support Group

Third Saturday of each month
Noon to 1 p.m.
Parkland Memorial Hospital
7th Floor, South
Seldin Learning Center
5201 Harry Hines Blvd
Dallas, TX



Please call
214-648-9534

Our monthly Burn Survivor Support Group is a comfortable place for burn survivors, their families and friends to share stories and support one another in the road to recovery.

<http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/education/medical-school/departments/physical-medicine/ntbrms/index.html>

Internet Resources



The Phoenix Society for Burn Survivors is a national organization with a mission to help burn survivors and their families cope with and overcome the unimaginable and difficult challenges they encounter following a burn injury. Check out the Phoenix Society website for events and more information on burn survivors at

www.phoenix-society.org
Moderated Online Chat Sessions on Wednesdays from 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 pm

Other useful websites:

- www.ameriburn.org
- www.burnsurgery.org
- www.burnadvocates.org
- www.burnsurvivor.com
- www.dallasamputeenetwork.org

SATELLITE CLINIC - East Texas Medical Center (ETMC) Tyler

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR OUR NEXT SATELLITE CLINIC:
MAY 2, 2014
9 a.m. - Noon

Please call Ruth Davies at 214-648-3654 to schedule an appointment.

Parkland's Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Physician and Burn Surgeon attend this clinic, along with NTBRMS staff.



Parkland Health & Hospital System Dallas

Burn Clinic

EVERY THURSDAY
 beginning at
 1 p.m.

6th Floor
5201 Harry Hines Boulevard
Dallas, TX 75235

Call to schedule an appointment
 214-590-0168

When you call please tell the receptionist that you would like to make an appointment for the "BURN CLINIC." Several clinics are scheduled in this area and this will be helpful for you to get to the correct clinic.

SAVE THE DATE

Outing for Pre-School Burn Survivors & Family
 April 21, 2014

Get ready for an exciting ball game with the
Frisco Rough Riders

Event Time and Location:
 Dr. Pepper Ball Park Frisco, TX
 7:00PM

Dinner and drinks will be provided

For more information call
 Donna Crump, Jolyn Schmerse,
 or Rosa Garces

214-590-6846