

# Burn discomfort: itch

Your child may experience itch at times during the burn healing process and they express discomfort differently to adults. Do you notice your child scratching or rubbing their burn or scar frequently? Are they playing and being as active as usual, or are they irritable and difficult to settle? These may all be signs that your child's burn is itchy or painful.

It is important to prevent your child from scratching the wound or dressing as this can cause new wounds and delay healing. Keep your child cool and comfortable and their fingernails trimmed to decrease discomfort and potential damage by scratching their fragile new skin. Advise the burns team if your child has any pre-existing skin conditions.

Please discuss your choice of medication for itch (antihistamine) with your pharmacist. You must advise the nursing staff what medication your child had had prior to having their dressing changed. If your child is being admitted to Ward 1B the medications given that day will determine their treatment and also if any additional medication is to be given.

## Itch relief (antihistamine) medications

The burn and the scar can be extremely itchy while it is healing and maturing. Keeping the scar hydrated and moist by regularly massaging can give temporary relief (see: health fact on burn scar management).

Using fragrance free soaps or using Dermaveen® shower and bath oil (containing natural colloidal oatmeal) can also be beneficial for the relief of dry, itchy or sensitive skin.

- Loratidine (Claratyne®, Lorapaed®, Lorastyne®)

Available over the counter at a pharmacy or chemist in liquid and tablet forms. Please follow the manufacturer's instructions for dose and frequency. This is a non-drowsy product that can be taken once a day from the initial onset of itch symptoms. Not recommended in children under one year of age unless advised by your doctor.

If your child remains uncomfortable and unsettled please contact PCH Ward 1B on 6456 3630. Alternatively, you can contact PCH Pharmacy Department Drug Information Line on 6456 0190 (select option 1), Monday to Friday during office hours.



Government of **Western Australia**  
Child and Adolescent Health Service



Telephone: (08) 6456 2222  
Produced by: Oncology Pharmacy  
Ref: 580 © CAHS 2017 rev 2020

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