

Mortality in the Burns Survivor – further follow up and intervention is required.

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Introduction: Post burn there are a number of ongoing physical and psychosocial problems. This study aimed to investigate percentage and cause of mortality post hospital discharge to investigate whether this differed from the non-burn population.

Method: Following ethical approval a burns database of 4,900 patients was linked with the PHA death registry. Patients who had been palliated and/or died during hospitalization were eliminated. Incidence of death at any time post hospital discharge was noted and compared to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Cause of death was linked to age, TBSA %, previous comorbidities, inhalation injury and time post discharge.

Results: Overall death rate for burn survivors was 64.4/1000 compared to 5.5/1000 from ABS. TBSA% ranged from 0.5 to 85% and age from 18 to 102 years. The greatest cause of death was cardiovascular disease occurring significantly more in those patients > 80 years old ($p < 0.0001$) however the overall rate due to CV disease was 0.01% compared to 0.0001% (ABS). The most frequent cause of death in patients aged < 40 years was intentional self-harm and major trauma ($p < 0.001$). The most common cause of death from 40-60 years was chronic liver disease ($p < 0.002$). TBSA% was not associated with a significant difference in cause apart from burns > 20% resulting in death due to infection ($p < 0.001$).

Discussion and Conclusion: Staff caring for burns are aware that there are ongoing problems post hospital discharge, however this high death rate due to specific instances in certain age groups warrants investigation and intervention.

Key Words

Mortality, Cardiovascular disease, Survivor, Self harm, Trauma, Epidemiology

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- Medical
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- Care
- Prevention
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