Current Burn Scar Management Practices for the Face and Neck: The Impact of "Hands On" Training

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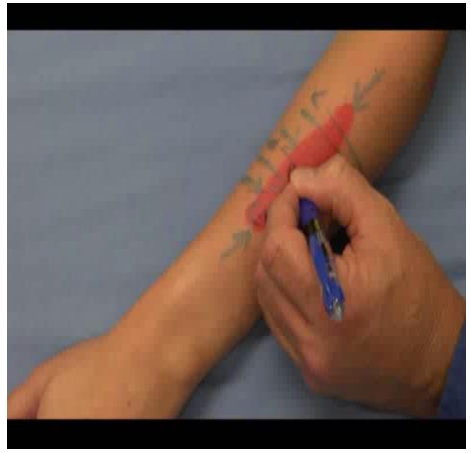
Introduction: New rehabilitation interventions have emerged and should be incorporated into scar management training programs. A comprehensive rehabilitation training program for the face and neck has been developed and tested for its efficacy.

Methods: A review of the burn rehabilitation training literature was performed. We found no specific training programs that address the face and neck of the burn survivor. Our training program addresses scar management of the face and neck along the continuum of care. The 2-day program includes a 4-hour didactic session and an 8-hour "hands on" experience. Pre/post training data was collected from 162 Occupational and Physical therapists at 11 facilities in the US to measure the success of the program.



Results: Therapists (97%) were extremely satisfied with the course indicating that they will apply the knowledge gained into their practice (95%). This is particularly interesting as therapists with extensive experience (over 10 years) indicated that they were never formally exposed to specific scar management training for the face and neck. Most therapists (88%) never fabricated all the appliances demonstrated in the course. Perhaps our most important finding is that therapists did not previously consider a comprehensive approach to treating the face and neck (91%). Therapists (98%) indicated that the didactic portion of the course followed by the "hands on" experience was well fitting as they were able to immediately apply learned principles into practice.

Didactic & "Hands-on" Training: Evaluation, Assessment, Goals, Positioning, Orthotics, Exercise, Scar Management; Pressure Garments, Inserts, Massage, Modalities, Skin Care; Make-up, Research, Community Re-integration

Discussion: We have identified that focused burn rehabilitation training courses are rare and that therapists welcome new educational opportunities via meaningful "hands on" training courses, that can directly impact their practice. Training courses for burn therapists must be comprehensive, incorporate updated modalities and be evidence based.
Today, large TBSA burns survive and detailed/comprehensive rehabilitation interventions are crucial in outputting good functional outcomes. Facility educators must seek to adapt rehabilitation programs that incorporate theoretical principles, evidence and "hands on" training.

Quotes: "this is the best way to learn" " I have been practicing for 21 years and have never done all of these splints" "the combination of lecture and hands on practice helped me understand what I am doing and why"

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