

Recurrent self-inflicted burns – A fourteen year retrospective analysis in a single tertiary level burns unit

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Background

- Self-inflicted burns are commonly admitted to burns units worldwide. These patients are often challenging to manage due to underlying psychosocial issues and multiple representations.
- The majority of these patients have an underlying psychiatric condition and require multi-disciplinary input.
- A small subset of these patients present to hospital with recurrent self-inflicted burns

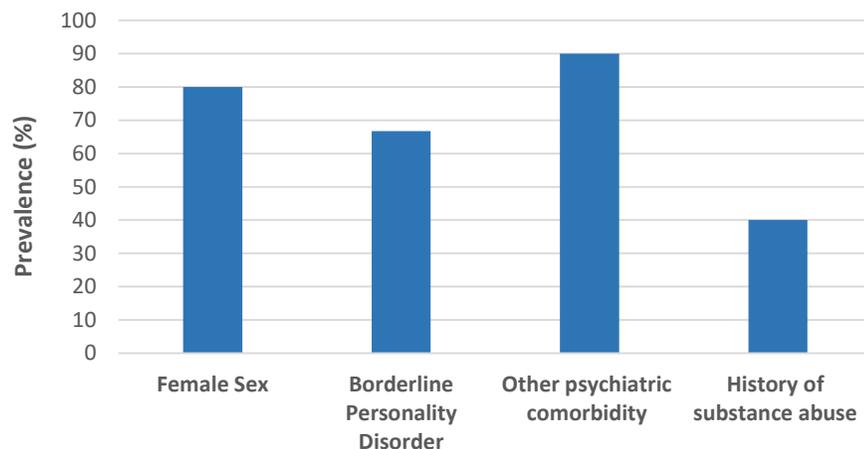
Aims

- Explore the associated factors that contribute to recurrent self-inflicted burns
- Identify factors to that may help minimise repeat presentations

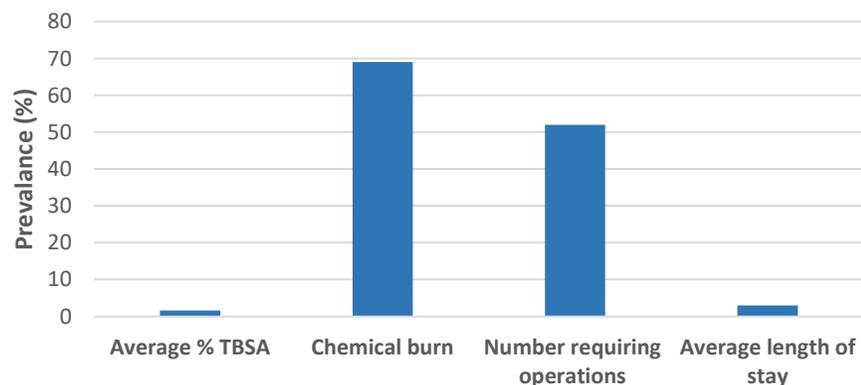
Methods

- Self-inflicted burns patient data was retrospectively drawn from a computerised registry at a single tertiary centre.
- Data analysis was limited to January 2004 to January 2019 since the registry started collecting data

Associated risk factors for repeat self-inflicted burns



Characteristics of recurrent self-inflicted burns



Results

- 8849 patients managed for acute burns during this period
- 193 (2.1%) were identified as self-inflicted burns. Of these patients 15 (0.2%) were identified to repeat self-inflicted burns (>1 presentation due to self harm/suicide attempt)
- These 15 patients they accounted for 75 burn presentations
- Chemical burns (69%) were the most common type of burn and average total body surface area (TBSA) was 1.6% (range 0.1-8%TBSA)
- Borderline personality disorder (67%), female sex (80%), presence of other psychiatric comorbidity (90%) and a history of substance abuse were (40%) were the most common risk factors identified
- Average length of stay was 3 days and 52% required grafting operations

Conclusion

- Recurrent self-inflicted burns represent a small number of burns presentations with relatively minor injuries but utilise significant resources due to their repeat presentations
- Specific targeted interventions and pathways are required focusing on treatable risk factors to help minimise recurrence