



West Penn
Hospital

West Penn Burn Center
First Class Burn Care
for Adults and Children

West Penn Burn Center
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Hospital

AHN.org

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West Penn Burn Center is the only facility of its kind in the region with verification from the American Burn Association and the American College of Surgeons for the treatment of both pediatric and adult patients.

By earning this distinction 6 times, we have demonstrated our ability to provide compassionate, specialized care centered on each patient:

- Patients are triaged by burn specialists and admitted directly to the Burn Center, bypassing the emergency room and admissions and eliminating unnecessary waiting time
- Once admitted, patients are in a “closed unit,” receiving care 24/7 by burn certified specialists and are discharged directly from the center rather than being transferred to other areas of the hospital
- Upon discharge, patients needing ongoing care are seen in our Outpatient Burn Clinic, continuing the same level of advanced care
- Specialized pediatric treatment and programs help children to recover from debilitating burn injuries, both physically and psychologically
- Patients with burns, soft tissue disorders and other nonhealing wounds receive care from specialists who provide the latest surgical techniques, skin treatment procedures and products
- Patients benefit from the research and education conducted at the West Penn Burn Center, which includes both preventive instruction and training for the treatment of burns



With emergency-level admission directly to the Burn Center, patients are triaged immediately by a team of burn specialists.

Specialized care is our focus and our #1 priority

Established in 1969, the West Penn Burn Center is a national leader in innovative burn care. As a valued community resource dedicated to the prevention and care of burn injuries, the center treats more than 2,000 patients each year from Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, Maryland and New York. We deliver high-quality comprehensive care — on both an inpatient and an outpatient basis — using the newest and most advanced technologies in the field.

The Burn Center’s strategic location within West Penn Hospital enables patients to arrive through the emergency entrance, but bypass the Emergency Department to be admitted directly to the center. Upon arrival, burn specialists begin triage immediately. Patients remain in the care of these focused experts for their entire stay at West Penn.

Our clinical team at the West Penn Burn Center includes highly experienced burn care specialists from many disciplines who share a common commitment and goal — to improve the lives of adults and children with burn injuries. Ultimately, the focus is to ensure the best possible functional and cosmetic outcomes in the safest and most efficient manner.



State-of-the-art burn center

The most advanced facilities and services

West Penn Burn Center supports comprehensive continuity of care. The patient's entire length of stay, from admission to discharge, takes place in the Burn Center under the continual medical management of the specialized burn team, decreasing the potential risk of infection for the patient and maximizing care.

Our facility provides patients with the latest in technology and advanced treatment, including:

- Fourteen private, temperature-controlled, ventilated rooms
- Six specially equipped beds for the most critically injured
- State-of-the-art treatment rooms
- Facilities to treat thermal, electrical or chemical injuries
- Special treatment protocols for inhalation injuries
- A children's playroom within the Burn Center
- Facilities for outpatient burn care
- A large, comfortable family waiting room

The services performed at the West Penn Burn Center are typically not available at facilities outside of a burn center. They include the most advanced techniques and procedures across key focus areas of burn and wound care. Services range from fluid resuscitation, nutrition management and wound care to a wide variety of surgical procedures. We are proud to be on the cutting edge by offering a number of advanced burn treatments:

- Innovative silver dressings that minimize patients' pain by eliminating the need for daily dressing changes (especially beneficial for children)
- Patient-specific, advanced fluid resuscitation management that directly aids in acute recovery; West Penn Burn Center developed fluid management protocols that are used nationally
- Electromagnetic-guided duodenal feeding tube placement to guarantee initiation of enteral feedings within hours of admission and delivery of the appropriate amount of nutrition to support hypermetabolic needs
- Surgical techniques to aid in wound closure that are tailored to the specific needs of each patient and the severity of the injury, including grafts using the patient's own skin, cadaver skin, porcine skin, acellular dermal products or the patient's own cultured epithelial cells
- Reconstructive procedures for the most severe cases, including contracture releases, Z-plasties, tissue flaps, tissue expanders and V-Y advancement flaps



A dedicated playroom for pediatric burn patients is located within the Burn Center, providing access to play and activity around the clock.

Excellence in Pediatric Burn Management

When it comes to pediatric patients, the burn injury statistics are alarming. Nationally, children under the age of 16 account for 29% of all burn injuries, with 19% of those injuries occurring in children under the age of 5. Burn-related injuries are categorized as accidental injuries; this category is the leading cause of morbidity and mortality in children ages 1 to 9.

West Penn Burn Center is the only burn center in the region to receive the honorable verification seal acknowledging excellence in pediatric burn management from the American Burn Association and the American College of Surgeons. No one in the region is more committed to treating and supporting children with burn injuries.

Our multidisciplinary pediatric team includes pediatricians, critical care, physical therapy, child life support, pediatric psychology and pediatric-trained nurses. They provide skills, expertise and compassion to deal effectively with the most challenging cases, helping children return to healthy, energetic lives.

Our specialists focus on the fact that children are not merely smaller adults. Children have physiologic and anatomical differences that warrant special attention when managing their burn injuries. When treating children, we carefully consider all of these differences:

- Nearly three times the body surface area to body mass ratio of adults
- Differences in skin thickness
- A higher metabolic and oxygen consumption rate
- Airway anatomical differences
- Limited physiologic reserve requiring a more precise fluid resuscitation
- Evaporative water loss proportionately higher than an adult
- Predisposition to hypothermia
- More challenging pain management

Our specialized pediatric burn care services are designed with our smallest patients in mind and include programs to help transition children after their inpatient stay:

- Nitrous oxide use for dressing changes
- Psychological assessment and support
- Pediatrician, pediatric critical care and pediatric anesthesiologists available 24/7 to participate in managing critical pediatric injuries
- Access to the children's playroom located inside the Burn Center
- School re-entry programs for burn-injured children
- An annual summer camp program where burn-injured children can interact

Recognizing the severe psychological impact of burns, we provide clinical consultation services to all pediatric inpatients and during most pediatric outpatient appointments. These services promote child and family psychosocial adjustment to the injury and its treatment, teach children and families how to cope with painful medical procedures such as dressing changes, and educate children and families about burn prevention.



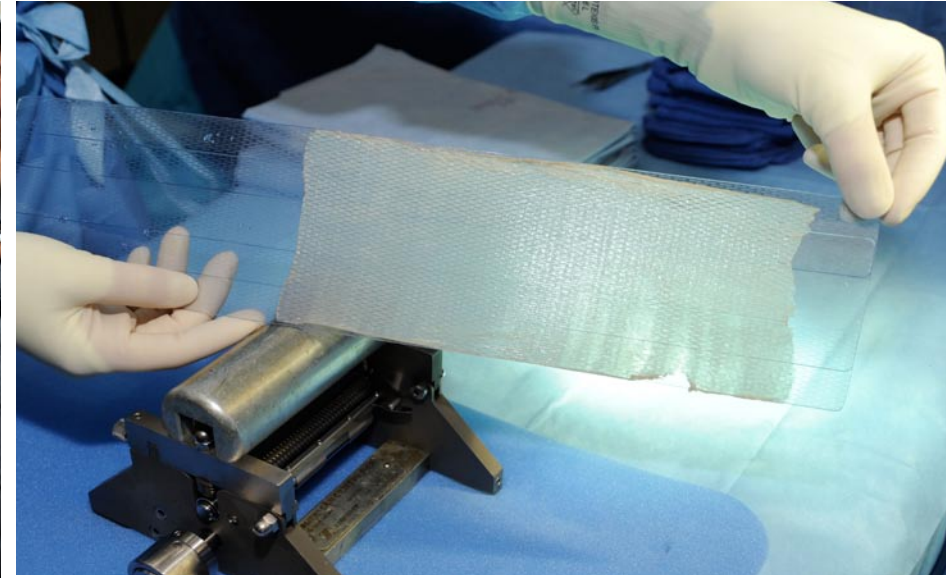
Dr. Ariel Aballay (left), the Burn Center's medical director, leads a team of caring doctors and specialists focused on delivering advanced care to burn patients.

Advanced wound management

Providing advanced wound management is a natural extension of the expertise and burn care experience acquired and successfully applied over the last 45 years in the West Penn Burn Center. We provide advanced wound healing for chronic, nonhealing and debilitating wounds, including some soft tissue disorders that strongly resemble burn injuries.

To treat these wounds and disorders, we have wound specialists who provide advanced surgical techniques in combination with special skin healing products. Among the soft tissue disorders we treat are:

- Nonhealing wounds: open wounds that have not responded to traditional therapy and have not healed after 3 weeks
- Degloving injuries: a type of traumatic avulsion in which there is a large amount of skin lost
- Major road abrasions: from bicycle, motorcycle and auto accidents
- Frostbite: caused by localized damage to skin and other tissues similar to a burn injury
- Necrotizing fasciitis: a bacterial soft tissue infection affecting deeper layers of skin, subcutaneous tissue and fascia that can occur after some minor trauma to the skin allowing bacteria to invade — also called “flesh-eating disease”
- Stevens-Johnson Syndrome and toxic epidermal necrolysis (TENS): life-threatening skin disorders that are usually the result of a drug reaction
- Scalded skin syndrome: caused by infection with certain strains of bacteria in which the skin becomes damaged and sheds; usually seen in children
- Bullous pemphigus: blistering disease of the skin and mucous membranes
- Calciphylaxis: vascular calcification and skin necrosis
- Purpura Fulminans: a disease associated with severe bloodstream infection, often causing gangrene of portions of the extremities



As a leader in burn treatment, medical professionals turn to West Penn Burn Center for education and training on advanced techniques.

Leading the way through education and research

As part of a large academic teaching system, West Penn Burn Center offers graduate training opportunities for physicians, residents and medical students who wish to increase their knowledge of burns and gain clinical experience in burn injury treatment. We also welcome students from other disciplines, such as nursing, clinical pharmacology, and physical and occupational therapy who have a desire to learn burn injury management.

Our education initiatives extend to the community as well. We provide burn prevention educational seminars in local preschools and schools.

Contributing to our education program is the Burn Center's commitment to research, which extends our patient-centered focus with a direct impact on patient care. As the region's recognized leader in the field, our clinical research is often highlighted at conferences as a model for burn care. The Burn Center's research projects have helped to develop techniques and protocols to lessen or prevent scarring, improve overall healing and decrease patient length of stay. Ongoing research topics include skin regeneration, dressing and debriding agents that may enable wounds to heal more quickly, techniques that may eliminate the need for surgery and, importantly, the psychological impact of burns (particularly in children).



The annual children's summer camp provides an opportunity for young burn victims to enjoy a carefree time of renewal and recovery.

Peer support to enhance healing

In addition to providing the latest in medical treatment and care, we recognize that peer support plays a significant role in fostering psychological recovery from a burn injury. For this reason, West Penn Burn Center has welcomed and supported the development of Burn Concern, a volunteer peer support group created by — and for — survivors of burn injuries and their loved ones, as well as those affected by a soft tissue disorder known as Stevens-Johnson Syndrome that symptomatically mimics a burn injury. The group holds regular meetings and events with the goal of helping burn victims transition to burn survivors.

To provide additional support for children between the ages of 7 and 17 who have suffered burn injuries, a summer camp was begun in 1987. The annual 5-day camp is offered to children at no cost. The children interact with others who have faced similar experiences and have the opportunity to participate in a variety of sports and activities that help to restore confidence and health.

As burn specialists, we balance compassion with passionate care. We share with our patients the tenacity and resilience required to overcome such an unexpected and traumatic injury.

— Ariel Aballay, MD
Medical Director, West Penn Burn Center