



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

## Burn Model System Newsletter

Winter 2009



### What Happens After Hospital Discharge?

The University of Washington Burn Model System has been involved in a study in which survivors are followed up during the 2 years following their injury.

This study focuses on the emotional and physical recovery

that occurs once patients leave the hospital.

Information gained during these interviews is compared to information concerning 'life' before the burn injury.

According to Gretchen

Carrougher, Research Nurse, "we are learning of the challenges faced and recovery achieved during this very crucial 2-year time period."

Read about an upcoming research study that will follow patients at 5 and 10 years from their injury (Research Update).

### Burn Injury Information Group

The burn injury informational support group meets on the 3rd Wednesday of the month from 1-2:00pm in room 8EH-50 at Harborview Medical Center. This

group is open to all burn survivors and their families. Upcoming meetings are February 18th, March 18th & April 15th, 2009. It is sponsored by the Northwest Burn

Foundation and it is at no charge. You can also participate by phone; contact Dr. Askay and she will provide all necessary information (no long distance charge will apply).

### Burn Survivor Profile - Maggie Schuler

Two months before my 21st birthday, I suffered burns over 35% of my body. The year was 1975.

I spent the next few months recovering and found that the greatest support outside of the hospital staff was my family, friends and a registered nurse who was a burn survivor herself. These people saved me by lifting my spirits. There was no psychological help, counseling, or support groups available at that time.

Following hospital discharge, I felt isolated because of my disfigurement – my face had required significant grafting. Even though my friends were supportive, it was very difficult. No matter where I went, there were taunts

and teasing because of my appearance. I believe that I survived this very painful time because I marched forward and chose to involve myself with nature and the animals on my farm. THIS truly is what saved me from serious depression. Today, many organizations recognize the importance of looking beyond injury survival. Current understanding concerning the impact of scarring is limited. I believe the whole person is impacted – both physically and emotionally. And – it is not just the victim who suffers, but family and friends. Healing happens so much greater and faster when you know you aren't alone and that you are loved and cared for.

### Research Update

With new funding from the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR), we are about to embark on a new follow-up study involving burn survivors who are now 5 or 10-years from injury.

This new study involves interviews with survivors who had participated in the 2-year follow up study mentioned above.

The goal is to learn what issues may still exist for those who suffered a significant burn injury.

Dr. Loren Engrav is the study primary investigator. Three other burn centers in the country are also participating - Johns Hopkins University, Shriners Hospital - Galveston, and University of Texas Southwestern.

Visit our website for more information - <https://depts.washington.edu/uwnidrr/>

### Did You Know?

Over 60% of burn victims in the U.S are now admitted to one of 125 specialized burn centers. By definition, these centers must have resources specific to the needs of burn survivors.

### Visit our website at

<https://depts.washington.edu/uwnidrr/> for more information.

To reach the UW/HMC Burn Center Clinic, call 206-744-5735.