PAEDIATRIC BURN INJURIES: A HOSPITAL BASED STUDY IN UGANDA

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**Introduction** Burns are one of the most devastating household injury. In Uganda, burn injuries account for 11% of all childhood injuries. The study objective was to determine demographic characteristics, severity, first aid treatment and outcomes of childhood burns in Uganda.

**Methods** Secondary analysis of hospital surveillance data from five representative regional hospitals was done. Data were collected over 12 months (August 2004 to July 2005). Individuals (0–16 years) were included over a 12 months period. A registry form was filled by trained health workers at emergency units. Frequency analysis was done.

**Results** 380 children were included with the central region registered more patients (44%). Five and under patients constituted 45%. Ratio of male to female was 1.3:1. Over 50% of patients had a serious injury. 88% of the children burned in their own homes in spite of a adult presence (83%). Majority of the children (54%) were burned while playing. 16% of burn injuries were reported intentional. Scalding by hot fluids (73%) was the common cause of burn injury. Over 50% of the patients were reported with serious injuries on upper extremities. Over 70% of children were given incorrect first aid treatment at home while others received none. 55.8% patients were discharged home by 2 weeks.

**Discussion and Conclusions** Burn injuries mainly affects children 5 years and under. Home-based prevention can reduce burn injuries in that age group. The intent behind burn injuries requires further investigation.