

Few young U.S. burn patients transferred to specialized centers

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(HealthDay)—Few American children with significant burns are

transferred to burn centers, despite current recommendations, a new study finds.

Clearer guidelines are needed on the care of pediatric burn patients, said the researchers after analyzing 2012 data from emergency departments across the United States.

The investigators found that nearly 127,000 children suffered burn injuries that year, and more than half (69,000) had significant burns. That means significant burns occur to about 189 U.S. children a day.

The American Burn Association recommends that children with significant burns be referred to a burn center for evaluation and care.

But this study found that among children with significant burns seen at hospitals that handle few such cases, about 90 percent were treated and released from the [emergency department](#). Four percent were admitted to the [hospital](#) and not transferred, and 5.6 percent were transferred to another hospital, the researchers said.

"While the majority of [children](#) treated without being transferred are likely receiving adequate burn care in the emergency department or possibly with outpatient follow-up care, [American Burn Association] guidelines do not specify when outpatient follow-up is appropriate," said study senior author Krista Wheeler. She's with the Center for Pediatric Trauma Research and the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio.

The burn association "could lessen this room for error by clarifying their guidance," she added in a hospital news release.

The study findings were released online and published in the September issue of the journal *Burns*.

More information: The American Academy of Pediatrics has more on [preventing and treating burns](#).

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