

News Release

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‘Spray-on’ skin latest innovation in burn care at Bridgeport Hospital

BRIDGEPORT, CT (July 22, 2019) – “This is probably the biggest innovation in burn care in some time,” says Alisa Savetamal, MD, medical director, Connecticut Burn Center at Bridgeport Hospital, about Regenerative Epidermal Suspension (RES) and the RECELL Autologous Cell Harvesting Device.

“It’s a new way of skin grafting but with much smaller donor sites.” Dr. Savetamal explains. “It is particularly beneficial to patients with large burns who have limited healthy skin to use for skin grafting, but it can be used in less extensive injuries as well.”

Produced by California-based Avita Medical, RECELL uses an enzyme to take a very small piece of the patient’s own skin, separate the cells, and process them into a spray-on form. RECELL is currently used in the treatment of acute burn wounds in patients 18 and older. It is directly applied to partial-thickness burn wounds or in combination with skin grafts (thin sheets of healthy skin taken from an uninjured area of the patient’s body) for deeper burns. The RECELL skin sample is processed in the operating room over 15 - 30 minutes and is used immediately.

Dr. Savetamal says RECELL reduces the need for traditional skin grafts, which may not be available depending on the patient’s burn size. A tiny skin sample can cover an area 80 times its size after being process with RECELL, so that a donor site smaller than a postage stamp can cover an area larger than the patient’s palm. “The benefit from RECELL for our burn patients is that they don’t have as large donor sites to heal in addition to their burns,” she says. “Fewer and smaller donor sites also mean less pain. This is cutting-edge technology that we are pleased to be able to offer to our burn patients at the Connecticut Burn Center.”

Established in 1973, the Connecticut Burn Center at Bridgeport Hospital is the only one in the state, and one of only 65 in the United States, verified by the American Burn Association and American College of Surgeons for meeting national standards in the treatment of burns.

The center's multidisciplinary team of physicians, surgeons, wound care specialists, specially-trained burn nurses and physician assistants, as well as physical and occupational therapists, nutritionists and social workers treats more than 200 inpatients and 1,000 outpatients each year who are burned by heat, scalding, radiation, chemicals and electricity.

In 2011-2012, the Burn Center underwent a \$1.5 million modernization of its facilities, generously supported by firefighter organizations, public utilities and other corporate donors and individuals, to create a more private, comfortable and functional environment for patients and families. Highlights of the renovation project included the addition of an overnight suite for families of patients; redesigned patient rooms for greater privacy and comfort; renovated rehabilitation room and specially-equipped shower room; and a larger nursing station.

Bridgeport Hospital, part of Yale New Haven Health, is a non-profit 501-bed acute care hospital with two campuses (plus 42 beds licensed to Yale New Haven Children's Hospital). Both Bridgeport Hospital and the Milford Campus of Bridgeport Hospital serve patients throughout Fairfield and New Haven counties. The hospital admits more than 23,000 patients and provides nearly 350,000 outpatient treatments annually. The Connecticut Burn Center at Bridgeport Hospital is the only burn center in the state and one of only 64 verified burn centers in the United States. Bridgeport Hospital is committed to providing safe, compassionate and cost efficient care its patients and the community. www.bridgeporthospital.org