

TIMES CITY

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City's first skin bank opened, NBC lends know-how

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Pune: Patients with severe burn injuries who need post-operative skin graft, will no longer have to search for skin donors. City's first skin bank was launched at the Poona Hospital and Research Centre (PHRC) on Sunday.

Facilitated by the National Burn Centre (NBC), Mumbai, the skin bank has been set up by the Rotary Club of Khadki in association with the Poona Hospital.

"The skin bank will take some time to become fully operational. For now, it has a cooling and storage system and skin grafting knife. A donated skin can be initially preserved

for weeks," said cosmetic surgeon Sunil Keswani, who is also an acting medical director of the NBC. The NBC has extended the technical know-how and training support to the skin bank at PHRC.

Plastic surgeon Shrirang Pandit, who is leading the skin bank unit at PHRC, said: "Around 100 burn patients in Pune suffer because of a dearth of skin donors. This is mainly because the city lacked a skin bank facility. The skin bank will now create awareness about skin donation and ultimately help burn patients get timely treatment."

Talking at the launch function, Bod Wesley, director of Euro Skin Bank, from Holland, spoke about his

experiences in setting up skin banks and usefulness of skin banks. He focused on the increasing need of skin donors for treating injured patients.

"In skin grafting, one does not need to match tissue types of the donor and the recipient. Any individual's skin can be grafted onto anyone. The graft is only a temporary barrier that protects the patient from fatal infections; eventually the patient's own skin regenerates," Wesley explained.

Since skin grafts are expensive and it is difficult to procure skin from living donors. Skin from dead bodies are easier to use. Skin obtained from bodies within 12 hours of death can be preserved, he added.

SKIN DONATION

Is the body disfigured when skin is removed?

No. Removal of skin is a surgical procedure and the body is treated with the same dignity as in any other operation

Are there any complications?

No, inner organs are not exposed. No bleeding occurs from the area of skin donation

What happens to the donated skin?

A system is in place to use the donated skin impartially. Factors such as race, gender,

age, income and celebrity status are not considered when determining who receives the donated skin

Will your decision to become a skin donor affect the quality of your medical care before your demise?

No. tissue recovery happens only after every effort has been made to save your life, and death has been legally declared

Are skin transplants successful?

Yes. Transplantation has become a very successful and accepted treatment.