

# City-based burns centre to set up skin banks

## Will collaborate with Euro Skin Bank for technical expertise

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**A** CITY-based skin bank is all set to sign a memorandum of association with the largest skin bank in the world. A collaboration between the National Burns Centre in Airoli, Euro Skin Bank, Dutch Burns Foundation will involve transfer of useful technology among other initiatives that will be taken as part of the collaboration.

"With 33 years of existence, the Euro Skin Bank is the most established skin bank in the world. Every year on an average 500 skin donations are done amounting to 10 per week, way ahead of India," said Dr S M Keswani, cosmetic surgeon at National Burns Centre, Airoli.

The collaboration will provide the Indian bank with technical expertise including a SOP manual and videos on skin retrieval. "Two of our doctors will be trained in skin-banking procedures," Keswani said.

"We are glad to collaborate with Indian skin banks. We will train the professionals here and audit the procedure for a few months, to see if they are following the standard procedure," said Bod Wesley, director Euro Skin Bank, who is in the city to visit the skin bank at the National Burns Centre, Airoli.

Wesley will also be attending an Asia-pacific Burns Conference in Delhi.

The National Burns Centre also aims to open skin banks across Maharashtra and Gujarat. Recently the centre opened the first skin bank in Pune. "Next in line are Nanded and Kolhapur. There is tremendous lack of awareness on skin donation. Skin collected from the dead may reconstruct lives of many burn patients," said Dr Keswani.

**After Pune, the National Burns Centre also aims to open skin banks in other parts. The next in line are Nanded and Kolhapur. There is tremendous lack of awareness on skin donation. Skin collected from the dead may reconstruct lives of many burn patients**

**Dr S M Keswani**

Cosmetic surgeon at National Burns Centre

On an average over 1,400 presentations are conducted in the whole of Netherlands. The bank there has a separate team of doctors, nurses and paramedics spreading awareness about skin donations. "These professionals do not go house to house, they only go to hospitals and retrieve skin. The skin is then kept in liquid glycerol at two to eight degree centigrade and can be preserved for five years at least," said Dr Keswani.

"They have agreed to share this technology with our centre. Also on an annual basis professionals from Euro Skin Bank will come down to train the doctors in India. They will also help us buy Dermatome (machine used to retrieve skin) at concessional rates," he added.

A patient dies of burns either due to infection or dehydration when the protective barrier is broken due to the burns. One can save such patients if the barrier is created again using new skin.