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## The role of nurses in pain management of burn patients: a stronger bond leads to increase patients' outcomes

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## Abstract

**Introduction.** Burn patients experience high levels of pain during their long hospitalization, therefore the right assessment and management of burn pain is one of the biggest challenges in Burn Units. Effective nursing care has a crucial influence on the overall satisfaction and experience of the patient. Good relationship between nurses and patients has proven to yield better results with pain control and improved psychological status of patients.

The aim of this study is to evaluate nurses' perceptions and experiences on the management of pain in burn patients, focusing on the role, communication, and bond between nurses and patients.

**Methods.** A qualitative study with purposive sampling was conducted, from September 2022 to October 2022, to recruit 15 registered nurses from a Reconstructive Plastic Surgery and Burn Centre in Italy. A face-to-face semi-structured interview was conducted, using an interview guide composed by two questions and six keywords, to identify the participants' perception on the role of nurse-patient bond and the management of burn pain.

**Results.** This study outlined different themes. A strong nurse-patient bond leads to: a better pain management, a reduction of healing time, an early detection of patient's signs of distress, whilst, a lack of bond resulted in: reduced pain tolerance, delayed wound healing, reduced cooperation during dressing. Time spent in patient care resulted to be the most influencing factor, in fact nurses reported to spend during their shift about 30% of their time in executing useless activities and with no added value for the patient's care, impeding effective nursing activities and missing an effective bond between nurses and patients in burn pain management.

**Conclusions.** The current study highlights the importance of time spent in patient care to create a stronger nurse-patient bond which could lead to an improvement in patients' outcomes.

Nurses, educated to establish a functional relationship with patients could increase burn pain management despite the subjective nature of pain.

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