

# Burn victims avoid hypothermia with new protocol

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Loyola University Health System has established new guidelines to protect burn victims at risk for hypothermia during surgery.

The skin regulates body temperature and when a large portion of skin is burned, the body loses heat. Loyola nurses recognized this threat and established a warming process for burn victims at risk for dangerously low [body temperatures](#).

"Burn victims are in an extreme amount of pain and are at risk for severe complications from their injuries," said Sharon L. Valtman, RN, BSN, CNOR, the Loyola nurse who initiated the warming process for patients. "It is our job as nurses to listen to our patients and identify ways to ease their discomfort and prevent further [health issues](#)."

The warming process Valtman established involves using Bair Hugger® technology to elevate the patients' body temperature. The device carries warm air through a hose to a blanket that is draped over the patient. Nurses initiate this process in a patient's hospital room one hour before surgery and continue it during the procedure. Studies have shown that keeping a patient warm during surgery results in less bleeding and faster recovery.

The success of this program led Loyola's Burn Center and operating room doctors, [nurses](#) and staff to adopt this process as hospital protocol for burn [patients](#).

Provided by Loyola University Health System

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