

Burn thinking exercise - Key

A 28-year-old female patient was admitted to the emergency department (ED) with recent burns on both arms. Her husband explained that when she was cooking dinner, she accidentally started a grease fire while he was downstairs in the basement watching football. She put on oven mitts to cover both hands and tried to smother the fire with a towel and a small fire extinguisher, which was quickly successful. The nurse notes that the patient has superficial partial-thickness burns on most of the anterior surfaces of both arms, but her hands are not affected. She also has a few superficial burns on about half of the posterior aspects of both arms.

Use an X to indicate whether the nursing actions below are ***Indicated*** (appropriate or necessary), ***Contraindicated*** (could be harmful), or ***Non-Essential*** (make no difference or are not necessary) for the patient's care at this time.

| Nursing Action | Indicated | Contraindicated | Non-Essential |
|---|-----------|-----------------|---------------|
| Obtain a 12-lead ECG | | | X |
| Initiate a IV line | X | | |
| Administer oxygen therapy | | | X |
| Remove eschar to prevent infection | | | X |
| Manage the patient's pain with analgesia | X | | |
| Administer tetanus toxoid for prophylaxis | X | | |
| Help the patient take a shower | | X | |

Rationales:

Patients who have superficial and superficial partial thickness burns have pain and are at risk for tetanus. These burns do not create eschar. Starting an IV line allows access for IV analgesia and fluids as the patient may require, it appears that the client does not have any airway or breathing issues. Therefore, oxygen is not needed. An ECG is also not indicated at this time. To prevent infection, the patient should not take a shower until healing occurs.