RETURN TO WORK SIX MONTHS AFTER BURN INJURY - A PROSPECTIVE STUDY AT THE HELSINKI BURN CENTER (039)

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**Question:** Burn and other major injuries often impair survivors’ capacity to work. We investigated predictors for not returning return to work by six months after acute burn injury. Differences in demographic, clinical and psychiatric characteristics between burn patients returning to work and those not were examined.

**Method:** All consecutive acute burn patients (N=107) admitted to the Helsinki Burn Center were assessed with structured psychiatric diagnostic interview at baseline. Of the 60 patients working at baseline, 53 patients (88%) participated in the six-month follow-up interview. Variables predicting not returning to work were analyzed in binary logistic regression models.

**Results:** Two-thirds (70%, 37 of 53) of the cohort followed returned to work by six months. Among patients not returning to work, mean %TBSA was higher (16.3% vs. 6.2%, P=0.001) and hand burns more common (75% vs. 41%, p=0.021) and presence of mental disorders during follow-up was also more common (81% vs. 30%, p=0.001), particularly of major depressive disorder (MDD) (31% vs. 3%, p=0.003) or delirium (31% vs. 3%, p=0.003), than among those returning. In a multivariate analysis, %TBSA burned (B= 1.12, p=0.029) and presence of MDD (OR 55.3, p=0.007) or delirium (OR 19.2, p=0.046) significantly predicted not returning to work.

**Conclusion:** Majority of the burn patients working at baseline returned to work by six months. Capacity to work after burn injury is predicted by both smaller %TBSA burned, and lack of diagnosable mental disorders, particularly delirium or MDD, after burn.