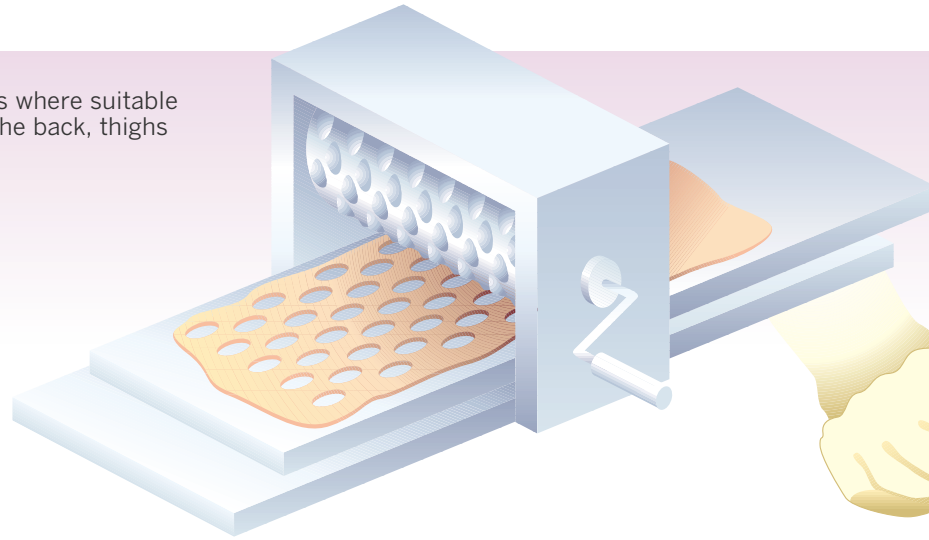
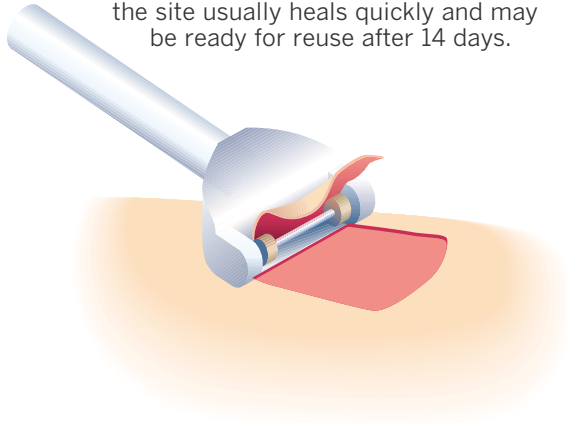


The art of skin grafting

Scarring is unavoidable in severely burned patients where suitable donor sites are limited. Preferred donor sites are the back, thighs and the buttocks.

1

Donor skin is harvested from an undamaged part of the body using a special knife called a dermatome. The removed skin is not full thickness and the site usually heals quickly and may be ready for reuse after 14 days.



2

The donor skin is meshed so that it may be stretched to cover a larger area. The skin will grow into the meshed areas naturally and pressure garments help to reduce scarring. In cosmetically important areas, such as the face, the donor skin is not meshed.

3

After debriding (removal of dead tissue) the recipient site is freshly bleeding and ready for donor skin placement. Blood vessels will grow within 3 to 4 days if placed on dermis and 5 to 7 days if placed on fat. The grafts are clipped or sutured together and then covered with a fine mesh gauze, saturated with topical antibiotics. Dressings and clips are removed after 5 or 6 days.

