

# SAVED BY THE SKIN!

City's first skin bank has been set up, which will preserve skins donated after death to be grafted on to burn and accident victims

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## WHO IS A SKIN DONOR?

- Someone who is free of diseases like cancer or HIV or any viral diseases
- Someone who has not died of a skin disease
- Someone who is of 18 years and above

## WHY A SKIN BANK?

- A skin bank is vital for patients with more than 50 per cent burns, their own skin cannot be used for grafting
- Skin banks can freeze viable donor skin and store it for up to five years

### DIPTI BARVE

In what is set to be a huge respite for burn victims, the city's first skin bank has been set up at the Poona Hospital. The bank will make it possible for people to donate their skin after death so that those suffering from burn scars and injuries can get a new graft.

The bank, located on the second floor of the hospital, is a joint venture between Poona Hospital & Research Centre and the Rotary Club of Khadki and has been set up along the lines of the Netherlands-based Euro Skin Bank.

### OPERATIONAL IN 2 MONTHS

"Equipment worth Rs 10 lakh for the bank is being procured and it should start functioning within two months," informed cosmetologist Dr Shirrang Pandit, who is leading the project.

Explaining the concept, Dr Pandit said that it would take only about an hour for the transplant and resurfacing.

The donated skin can be preserved in a solution for three to five years in glycerol and can be used for burn and accident patients who may have lost large areas of their skin.

### PAY ONLY THE PROCESSING FEE

"The patient opting for such surgery will be required to only pay the processing fee and nothing for the skin since it will be a donated one," he added.

Dr Pandit further informed that the processing fee will be Rs 4,000 - Rs 6,000, depending on the need of the skin.

### SIX ANTIGEN TESTS FOR DONOR

As for the donors, he or she just has to

fill a consent form and undergo six antigen tests, including that for HIV and other communicable diseases. A sticker will then be given to the family of the donor as a reminder.

### A BOON FOR BURN VICTIMS

According to the doctors, the bank will be a boon in the present scenario where a patient with even 40 per cent burns can succumb to the injuries due to spread of the infection.

"We will be able to treat the patients efficiently with ready skin available for resurfacing. The donated skin will be stored as per its specifications at this bank," said Mahesh Makhija of Rotary Club of Khadki.

Bod Wesley, director of Euro Skin Bank, is currently in Pune to provide guidance on the international standards required for a skin bank.