

study reviewed case notes over a 68-year period and, we feel, does not fulfil the criteria needed to change current practice. We agree with the majority view in the literature, which is to favour excision of NSJ, especially if any nodular or atypical features are present, even in children.

Whereas NSJ was previously dismissed as a benign lesion, albeit of malignant potential in adults, this case emphasises the importance of early excision at all ages, especially if there are any irregular areas within the lesion.

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## Heating-pad burn as a complication of abdominoplasty

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**SUMMARY.** As the sensory nerves supplying the abdominal wall are divided during abdominoplasty, sensory changes occur in the abdominal skin after surgery, which are troublesome for some patients. These sensory changes can lead to burn injury in uninformed patients. We report the case of a patient who sustained a second-degree burn to the anterior abdominal skin following the application of a heating pad after an abdominoplasty. This burn healed with conservative treatment. Burn injuries due to sensory loss in the abdominal skin following abdominoplasty must be kept in mind, and patients must be informed about this complication. © 2003 The British Association of Plastic Surgeons. Published by Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

**Keywords:** abdominoplasty, thermal injury, complications, heating pad.

Abdominoplasty operations may lead to a number of complications, which are well discussed in several reports.<sup>1–5</sup> Burn injuries due to sensory loss have been described in the reconstructed breasts of patients who have had latissimus dorsi flaps and TRAM flaps.<sup>6–11</sup>

We present a case in which a patient sustained a deep second-degree burn following abdominoplasty.

## Case report

A 53-year-old woman underwent abdominoplasty. She placed a heating pad over the abdominal wall 3 weeks after surgery in order to relieve lower abdominal pain. After she removed the heating pad, she noticed that the skin was erythematous. The following day, she noted blister formation and eventual full-thickness necrosis (Fig. 1). This second-degree burn healed



**Figure 1**—Initial presentation of the burn following the application of a heating pad. Note the full-thickness necrosis of the abdominal skin.

with conservative treatment. The wound had completely re-epithelialised in 3 weeks.

### Discussion

During abdominoplasty, neural connections are usually severed during the extensive undermining of the abdominal skin, resulting in a loss of sensation. Recovery of protective sensibility generally requires between 6 months and 3 years.<sup>12</sup> During this period, the insensate skin is susceptible to trauma, and a burn could easily be sustained following prolonged contact with hot objects or sun exposure. There is no report bringing this particular complication to the attention of plastic surgeons, who should include precautions against the use of a heating pad or other hot object in their instructions to patients following abdominoplasty.

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## Bilateral upper and lower lid fatty herniation: an unusual presentation of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma

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**SUMMARY.** We report the case of a patient presenting with eyelid hernias who required bilateral upper and lower blepharoplasty; histological examination of the excised fat revealed B-cell non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. At diagnosis, the disease was already systemically advanced, but the patient was asymptomatic. No sign of disease had been detected in the preoperative tests. The bilateral orbital presentation of a systemic lymphoma is very rare, and is usually accompanied and revealed by exophthalmos, increased tear secretion, diplopia and decreased visual acuity. To our knowledge, this is the first case in which lid hernias were the first and only clinical sign of such a systemic disease.