

BEING SAFE IS BLISS

Lin Yu-Ching, Operating Room Registered Nurse, Taipei Tzu Chi Hospital

In carrying out a debridement skin graft surgery, a long stretch in time will risk a massively burned patient the loss of blood and drop of body temperature due to a large open wound area. Therefore, this kind of operation usually takes two to three times the personnel more than a normal operation. However, the more people huddle around the operating table, the more tasks to be performed from the perspective of a mobile care division nurse. At that moment I wish I was a centipede with many hands and legs, working on never ending tasks, filling warm water bottles and dispensing medical supplies. During the operation, many calls were made request blood, transfusion, and the entire process repeats itself again and again...

To make matters worse, the operating room air conditioning was turned off because the optimal temperature needed to be higher than regular room temperature, which made everyone in the operating room soaked in sweat – hot and



exhausted. Exhaustion is secondary, but the fear of potential contamination from perspiration is paramount. Nurses helped wiping the sweat off, and attaching special ice-pack for attending physicians. After the operation, we often have a feeling of fatigue; with tired legs trained like the “iron legs” every day, so busy that there is no time for water break or use the rest room, it really was an effective aerobic exercise!

When thinking of the pain of the patients, we are fortunate to be able to help so the tasks do not look difficult. No wonder Tzu Chi volunteers do not say hard, they just say joyfulness. Since we can all work hard, it means another kind of joyfulness - a blessing, laboring hard to help people is a blessing.

Recently, the patients under my care are improving slowly. Several critical patients, one by one, were out of the intensive care unit, and some patients had been discharged. My heart is really happy for them, but the rest of the rehabilitation of the road is a long process. Be strong! You are still young; you will be able to make it.