

## Grafts kit a winner

By ADRIAN EVANS

IT'S NOT your standard wish list item but the Zimmer air dermatome kit is a definite winner for the National Burn Centre at Middlemore Hospital.

The state-of-the-art surgical instrument is used to harvest a thin layer of skin from one area of the body to be attached to another.

It is the first kit donated by the Burns Support Group charitable trust and will join three others at the centre.

Plastic surgeon Dr Amber Moazzam says the latest addition will help reduce waiting times for patients needing skin grafts.

"We treat all the major burns from around the country so it's a vital piece of equipment for our surgery and we can't do without it," he says.

Dr Moazzam says the kit's high-speed cutting action takes grafts that are smooth and uniform, allowing patients to heal better.

"Up to 10 sheets of skin with the same thickness can be taken," he says.

"It's a very advanced piece of equipment and I think without this technology it would be very hard to do the types of major surgery that we do on a regular basis," he says.

"If we need to be able to take large pieces of the skin this machine is the right thing for it."

### DON'T USE FLOUR

A viral email advising burn victims to use flour to cool burns and prevent scarring is misleading the public, burns specialists say.

The email urges readers to cool burns with flour and is undermining first aid messages, National Burn Centre clinical nurse specialist Deborah Murray says.

"We try to reach as many people as we can but with viral emails it can quickly damage the messages out there."

It's unclear where the message originated from but it has shown up as far a field as England.

One email Ms Murray received even had a council logo on it.

"It gives the message a credibility that it doesn't deserve.

Basically the first aid it's recommending is really inappropriate."

All burns should be treated with cool running water for at least 20 minutes.



Skin to skin: Dr Amber Moazzam, left, of the National Burn Centre at Middlemore Hospital accepts the new skin graft equipment from Carrie Trow of the Burn Support Group.

Photo: FIONA GOODALL

## Police probe possible link after TAB raid

By PIP BOURKE

A female shop attendant was left shaken after being robbed at gunpoint on Saturday morning.

**Caught on camera:** Police want to identify these two men caught on CCTV during an aggravated robbery at the TAB on Ormiston Rd, Flat Bush.

Three men entered the TAB on Ormiston Rd, Flat Bush, at about 10.30am, one armed with a rifle. They demanded money and got away with an undisclosed sum.

A fourth person was waiting in a stolen vehicle outside. The vehicle was a Toyota Premacy registration EZA117. The incident is yet another

in a spate of aggravated robberies across east Auckland.

Police are still investigating an attempted robbery at an East Tamaki dairy last month that was foiled when the dairy owner threw a chair at the gun-wielding intruder.

A man was admitted to hospital after being assaulted during a separate raid on his

Cascades Rd liquor store that night.

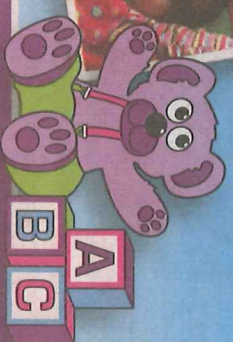
Detective sergeant Dave Glossop of Otara police says they are not ruling out any possibility that the robberies could be connected.

Anybody with information is urged to call police on 259-0600 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800-555-111.



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