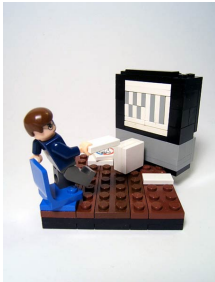


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By: Andrei Dumitrescu, Games Editor

Wii Treats Burn Victims

There's more than one hospital using the console



Even Lego is playing the Wii

A hospital in South East England has begun using the Nintendo **Wii** console as part of the recovery program for some of its patients that have been treated for burns. When the damage done by the burns themselves is light to moderate, the immobilization of the arm needed for treatment can result in sluggish arm movement and a disposition for further injury. The Wii is used as part of the recovery process because there's little chance of physical damage to the hand resulting from Wii use and because the patients have fun while using the console. The Wii incorporates advanced tracking and communication technology to allow players to mimic natural movements when playing games on the console. "When recovering from an operation, such as a skin graft, patients may need recover normal use of their hands and arms," said Maureen Adams, head of therapy at Queen Victoria NHS Foundation Trust in East Grinstead. The Wii is helping to change this situation. And burn victims are not the only ones benefiting from what some already call Wii-habilitation. Most of consoles used by the hospital have been donated. In the United States veterans that have sustained serious trauma to the brain are using the Wii to help improve their coordination. Studies and clinical trials have shown that the brain is more likely to recover if the activities it is performing seem like being "fun". So, including the Wii as a way to exercise and keep the brain activated has had spectacular results in some cases. There are also more and more elderly homes that use the Wii as a tool in combating the effects of aging. Older people don't have the strength and resilience to go out and exercise, but they welcome the Wii as an intuitive way of exercising both the body and the brain. Could stories like these signal a way the Wii can gain wider acceptance not just among gamers, but also amongst people that benefit from it without being drawn to play games? It certainly seems so.