

Scar tissue management

Scars are fibrous tissues that forms on the skin after a wound, injury to the surface of the skin or as a result of surgical intervention.

They form as a result of the natural healing process of the skin. However, everyone's skin is different and some people are more prone to problems with their scars.

Initially, scars may look flat and whitish in colour, but they can change and become hard, raised and thick. They may also stick to the underlying tissue, itch or be sensitive to touch or when using your hand. A scar can tighten and if it is close to or runs across a joint, it can restrict joint movement which may reduce hand function.

Scar Tissue Massage Benefits and Techniques

The use of massage can help improve the appearance of the scars, help them soften, flatten, increase their mobility and decrease their sensitivity.

- You can start massaging the scars gently once the stitches have been removed and the wound is fully closed.
- Use an unperfumed moisturising cream or lotion such as E45, Nivea, or Vaseline Intensive Care.
- Aim to massage the scar and any tight/hard areas close to the scar, starting with 2-3 minutes increase to 5-10 minutes, 2-3 times a day.
- Massage along the length of the scar in small circles using your thumb or two fingers. Go clockwise and anti-clockwise.
 1. Next, massage horizontally across the scar in small movements.
 2. Then, work in a random manner going across and in a diagonal manner across the length of the scar.
- The massage needs to be deep and firm to the point where the skin blanches. It should be pain free.

It may take several months to achieve a flat, mobile and non sensitive scar. You may be prescribed a silicone gel to help with the process.

Further Information

If you have any questions or queries regarding any of the information, please do not hesitate to ask your Specialist Therapist in the Occupational or Physiotherapy Department

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Sources of information

BAHT- British Association of Hand Therapists
ESHT Special interest Hand Therapy group

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: (01424) 755255 Ext: 2620

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your Occupational or Physiotherapist.

Reference

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