

## Patient information

# Scar management

All wounds and surgery will cause a scar to develop. Scars are produced as a result of the body's normal healing process. The process of scar healing can take up to 2 years to fully mature. Once the wound has healed over you can carry out treatment to help improve the appearance and prevent it sticking to underlying structures.

## Scar massage

Newly healed skin is unable to lubricate itself as well as undamaged skin so once the wound has healed a gentle moisturized massage along the wound site can help prevent drying and cracking.

Once the wound has healed fully a more vigorous scar massage can be applied. This will help to prevent the scar tissue sticking to underlying tissues and help improve the appearance of the scar.

Use a thick, un-perfumed cream such as E45. Only using a small amount apply it to the scar, rubbing deep and hard across the scar in small circles (not along the scar). Your therapist will demonstrate the correct technique.

## Silicone gel

These can either be applied as gel sheets or creams. Silicone gel can help reduce any redness and help to flatten the scar. These cannot be used until the wound is fully healed.

## Gel sheets

Your gel needs to be cut to size to cover the scar, the gel should stick to your skin but may require further fixation with a bandage and tape. It can be worn under a splint if required.

Build up tolerance to the gel gradually. Day 1, wear for 2-3 hours check the skin for irritation then progress daily increasing to wearing it for a minimum of 12 hours up to 23.

Ensure your skin is clean and dry before applying and make sure there is no moisturiser residue. The gel sheets can be cleaned in mild soap and water and reused until they fall apart or lose their stickiness.

Continue using the gel sheets until your scar has become pale and soft.

## **Tubed gel**

This is used for areas where it is difficult to apply gel sheets. Before applying ensure your skin is clean, dry and ensure moisturiser is fully absorbed. Apply to your scar twice daily. If you develop a rash or allergic reaction then discontinue use of these treatments.

## **Pressure garments**

These are generally used for burn scars or after skin grafting. They work by applying pressure on the scar to help it “mature” in a more orderly fashion. The process can take considerable time so you will not see changes immediately. If you require a pressure garment your therapist will advise you regarding wearing times as required.

Treatment recommended .....

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Frequency .....

Therapist .....

Telephone number .....

*If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities please visit the website for AccessAble (the new name for DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/west-suffolk-nhs-foundation-trust>*



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