

Scar Management

What is a Scar?

A Scar develops as part of a normal wound healing process. Mr Mc Donald will take great care to make any scar as discreet and small as possible.

Factors that affect wound healing and scar formation;

Nationality: darker skinned people are more likely to develop thickened scars.

Age: Older patients have skin that is lax and scars settle more rapidly. In younger patients the skin is tight and it can be 18 months – 2 years before the scar is mature.

Health: illnesses such as Diabetes/ smoking/poor nutrition all affect wound healing and scarring

Site of wound: chest and upper body tend to be more susceptible thickened scars.

Phases of Scar formation:

IST is the inflammatory stage that begins within the 1st couple of days. During this time bleeding stops, white blood cells come to the site to fight any infection. The wound looks red and swollen.

Proliferative stage is next. Over the next 2 to 4 weeks the body produces fibroblast cells producing collagen which pulls the wound edges together. At this stage the scar becomes thicker red and contracts. The scar is more obvious and uncomfortable

Remodelling stage: this stage can take a few months to a few years. The scar flattens, fades and is softer and over time. It is now referred to as a mature scar.

To help your scar mature we might suggest

- Massage
- Tape

- Silicone tape

Mr McDonald will suggest which option is best for your wound.

Why use Massage?

Massaging a scar involves rubbing and moving the skin and underlying tissue in a firm manner. When massaging, it is recommended that you use a non-perfumed moisturising cream such as sorbilene. This will help moisturise the scar.

Scar tissue may become hard and raised. Massage can help to soften and flatten scar tissue.

Scars may feel sensitive, tingle or hurt when touched. Regular massage can help to control this and eventually the sensitivity should settle down.

How to Massage

Place the pad of your thumb or finger on the scar. Massage using a slow, circular motion so that the skin moves on the underlying scar tissue. Repeat this process across the entire scar. Use firm pressure; however do not cause any damage to the skin.

When to Massage?

- Start to massage your scar as soon as your wound is fully healed.
- It is usually recommended that you massage your scar 2-3 times every day
- Continue to massage your scar until it has matured. A scar is mature when it is paler, flatter and softer.
- It is recommended that you continue to moisturise your mature scar regularly
- Do not massage open wounds

Why use tape?

Adhesive tapes apply gentle pressure to scars. Tape helps support wounds that are under tension. This helps to reduce the possibility of the scar becoming thick and raised. Adhesive tapes can be used over wounds that are not completely healed or when scabs are still present.

We will apply the tape in the rooms and show you how to apply once home

Once tape needs changing, remove old tape using vegetable oil this may be used to help lift adhesive off with little discomfort

- Shower the wound
- Pat the skin dry
- Put tape directly onto scar
- Change every 1-5 days or as necessary

- Can be left on for bathing and showering
- If you develop a rash or irritation, leave the tape off that area until the skin has healed. Then commence again

Silicone Tape

Silicone tape is made from a clear, soft, medical grade silicone material that sticks to the scar. It is a safe and effective treatment that helps to flatten and soften scar tissue.

How to use Silicone Tape

- Silicone tape should be introduced to the skin in stages; the tape should initially be worn for a short period of time example - 1 hour
- Remove the tape and check for any redness or itching – this is rare, however if this is the case stop using it.
- Continue to use the tape slowly with frequent resting periods as the skin becomes accustomed to the tape it should be worn as often as possible.
- Clean the scar and surrounding skin with water in the shower
- Pat skin dry
- Peel the silicone tape off the protective plastic liner. Save the liner for later use.
- Place the sticky side of the tape directly onto the scar.

Care of Silicone Tape

- Wash the silicone tape at least once per day with soap and water
- Rinse well and pat dry with a lint free cloth.
- When not in use, place the silicone tape on the protective liner and store in plastic wrap or foil, away from direct sunlight
- Can be reused several times; freshened with a few drops of water – discard when no longer sticky

Precautions

- Do not apply silicone tape to open wounds
- Do not wear silicone tape when playing sport and are likely to get hot – you may develop a rash.

Where to purchase

We use Siltape – this can be purchased online www.defries.com.au online shop for approximately \$24.26 plus delivery

If you have any concerns regarding the appearance of your scar please contact the Rooms