



References/Further Reading:

The British Skin Foundation website -

<https://www.britishskinfoundation.org.uk/blog/the-benefits-of-scar-massage>

NHS Website

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/scars/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/keloid-scars/>

This leaflet is for your reference following clinical assessment by the Clinical Nurse specialist.

Nurse Led Scar Clinic Advice

**Clinical Nurse Specialist
Plastic Surgery
St John's Hospital**

Thank you for attending the Nurse-led scar clinic today.

This information is to help you understand the possible treatments available for symptomatic scars.

Scars occur when there has been damage caused to the deep layers of the skin, whether from surgery, injury, burn or piercing. As we all have different skin types we all heal very differently and some people are predisposed to developing more visible, troublesome scars than others. It can take up to 18 months until a scar reaches full maturity. Once full maturity has been reached, some scars can look raised, red and can sometimes become itchy. Although scars are permanent, there are four possible forms of treatment for reducing the symptoms of troublesome Scars.

(1) Scar Massage

Massage and moisturisation are the most important factors in scar care. Carrying out scar massage can help improve the appearance of scars by helping them to soften, flatten, appear less red and decrease their sensitivity.

- Using an un-perfumed moisturising cream or oil such as E45 cream or Baby Oil, massage the entire scar with firm pressure (this means enough pressure to turn the skin/scar white but not so hard it causes discomfort). Do this for 5-10 minutes 2-3 times per day.
- Massage along the length of the scar in small circles using your thumb or two fingers. Go clockwise and anti-clockwise.
- Then, work in a random manner going across the length of the scar.

It may take several months to achieve a flat, supple and non-sensitive scar.

(2) Application of silicone gel

Research has shown that silicone can be useful to help treat scars. However, it should not take the place of essential scar massage (1).

Different manufacturers have produced different forms of silicone gel and therefore their own specific instructions should be adhered to. In most cases;

- Ensure the area is clean and dry (wash off any unabsorbed moisturising product used from the scar massage (1))
- Apply a small amount of silicone onto the scar and smooth over the entire scar ensuring it is distributed in a very thin layer and leave to dry, do not rub it in (if the product is still wet after 5 minutes you have applied too much!).
- You can cover this with make-up or clothing once dry.
- Apply twice per day.

Be persistent, it may take many months to achieve results.

(3) Intralesional Steroid injection

Research has shown that injection into the scar tissue with corticosteroid may, in some cases, help the scar to settle, flatten, become less itchy and red. This is administered by the Clinical Nurse Specialist or Consultant and it can take a few treatments to see results. You should continue to carry out Scar massage (1) and if relevant apply silicone gel (2) in between visits for the treatment.

(4) Scar Revision Surgery

In some circumstances patients may be offered scar revision surgery. This involves cutting out the area and re-stitching. It is worth exhausting all other sources of treatment before selecting this option as there is no guarantee the new scar will settle and mature any better. This is carried out following assessment by a Plastic Surgeon.