

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Hand Therapy: Scar management

Your skin is able to repair itself when damaged by injury or surgery. When skin is damaged a scar forms. Scarred skin does not behave like normal skin and is not as stretchy. This can lead to problems with skin tightness and loss of movement.

Scars can become tight, bulky, sensitive, itchy, red or painful. These problems usually improve with time, although in some cases this may take up to two years.

There are treatments your therapist may use to help prevent or improve problems with your scar.

These treatments should be used under the direction of your hand therapist.

Contact your therapist if you experience any severe discomfort, itching, allergies or a rash:

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on (01623) 622515, extension

For appointment queries please contact Therapy Services reception at King's Mill Hospital on (01623) 622515, extension 3221, or Newark Hospital on 01636 685885.

Scar massage

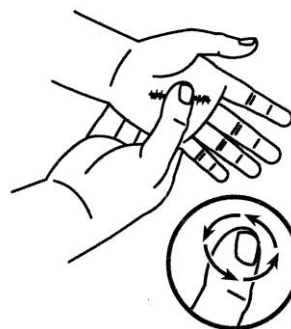
Massaging a scar involves rubbing and moving the skin and underlying tissue. You are recommended to use a non-perfumed moisturising cream.

Why massage?

- Massage can help soften and flatten scar tissue
- Scar tissue may stick to underlying structures - massage can prevent this from happening and keep the scar flexible
- Scars can feel sensitive or hurt when touched - massage can help to settle this.

How to massage

Place the pad of your thumb or finger on the scar. Massage using a slow circular motion so the skin moves on the underlying tissue. Repeat this process over the whole scar area.



Use firm pressure but don't cause damage to the skin. Your therapist will demonstrate and practise this with you.

When to massage:

- As soon as your wound is fully healed.
- Two to three times a day for five to 10 minutes.
- Continue until your scar has matured (looks paler, flatter or softer).
- Continue to moisturise your scar regularly.

Precautions

Do not massage open wounds. If your scar becomes blistered, re-opens or develops a rash, stop massaging and contact your therapist.

Silicone gel/Mepiform

Allow your skin to become used to the gel by building up the amount of time you wear it. Start with a few hours and by the end of a week you should be able to wear it all the time.

- Remove silicone gel/Mepiform from sheet – don't throw sheet away.
- Apply directly to scar.
- Use a dressing (for example Mefix) to hold in place if necessary.
- Wash dressings daily in warm water and pat dry.
- Gel will last several weeks; once it starts to fall apart or is no longer sticking, you will need a new piece.

You should not miss your appointment with the hand specialist or hand therapist if one has been requested.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints,

and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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