

Scar Care

Patient Advice Leaflet

What is a scar?

A scar is part of your body's normal healing process. It is a mixture of blood vessels, cells and fibrous tissue.

The amount of scar tissue depends on:

- how much time has passed since your injury;
- the extent of your injury;
- the size of the incision (cut) made for surgery.

Your scar may appear extremely good immediately after your operation, but then go through a period when it becomes red and raised. This should improve, but healing can take up to 18 months.

Scar massage

You should massage your scar for **ten** minutes, **five** times each day.

Massaging your scar regularly can greatly help it to heal. Massage helps to prevent the scar from sticking to the body tissues underneath it, which can limit movement. It also helps to reduce redness and swelling and speeds up the flattening of the scar.

Massage your scar, using a non-perfumed cream such as E45, Nivea or aqueous cream. Use sufficient pressure that the surface skin is moved over the underlying tissue. This will help to reduce the amount of dry skin and soften your scar.

Your physiotherapist will show you how to do deeper massage, in circular motions across your scar. You may need to continue with massage for at least 3-6 months.

Sun protection

New scars may be sensitive to sunlight. You will need to protect the scar for about one year while the scar matures with a high factor sun cream.

Further information

We hope this leaflet will help you understand how to care for your scar. If you feel you need any more information or have any concerns please contact the Physiotherapy Department on 021 4922 400.