



Scar Care

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Information for patients who may have scarring after self harm

Your Scar

As wounds heal they go through several changes. By following this advice, you can help reduce the scarring to a minimum. This will give you the best cosmetic result for your scar. However it will not make your scar disappear completely.

Scar Care

- After your stitches are removed you may have skin tape, or steri-strips (paper sutures) over your wound/scar. These are put on to help support your wound/scar as, although the wound is closed it can still be fragile.
- After a week or on the advice of your Consultant, these can be removed and the area washed as normal.
- You should then massage your scar with simple moisturisers two to three times a day.
- Massage involves firm pressure in circular strokes paying attention to any hardened or raised areas.
- It sometimes takes over one to two years for the scar to settle.
- The scar will always be weaker than the healthy skin around it and will only achieve up to 80% of it's original strength.

Take Care in the Sun

- Unprotected exposure to the sun increases the risk of skin cancer.
- Use a high factor sun cream (factor >30) and top up regularly.
- Drink plenty of fluid, such as soft drinks and water (not alcohol) to keep hydrated.
- Wear a hat and limit your time in direct sun light.

Your scar will be very sensitive to sunlight. It will become red and possibly blister unless you protect it from the sun for the first two years.



Types of Scar

Normal

- All scars are red at first and may also be raised and itchy.
- Normal scars mature to a flat pale appearance over a period of a few months to 2 years.

Hypertrophic

- These are red, raised, thickened and mature slower than normal scars.
- They will flatten and become paler but this can take several years.
- There are treatment options to aid these to settle which your doctor/nurse will discuss with you if needed.

Keloid

- These are red, lumpy and grow bigger than the original wound.
- These can be genetically influenced if your parents have had these types of scar.
- You may be at more risk of these scars if you have highly pigmented skin.
- These are difficult to manage but there are treatment options which you can discuss with your Plastics Doctor if required.

Contracture

- Scars which have tightened and shortened over a joint causing a deformity or reducing function.
- A Physiotherapist will aid you to carry out exercise to keep the scar stretched, you may also require a splint.
- Further surgery may be needed to release the contracture.

If you have a problematic scar, you can request referral to Plastic Surgery for assessment.

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Further Scar Care

If you wish to be referred to plastic surgery for a opinion on your scars please contact your GP to consider whether a referral is appropriate

If you wish to consider skin camouflage for your scars please contact your CAMHS care coordinator to request a referral to Changing Faces

<https://www.changingfaces.org.uk/>

Buckinghamshire CAMHS 01865 901325
www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/camhs/bucks/

If you would like to have information translated into a different language, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at: EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

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পেতে চাইলে অনুগ্রহ করে আমাদের সাথে যোগাযোগ করুন।

Urdu اگر آپ یہ معلومات دیگر زبان یا مختلف فارمیٹ میں چاہتے ہیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

Chinese 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

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Portuguese Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

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