

# What About The Scarring?

All wounds heal with a scar whether from trauma or a surgical incision. Plastic surgeons are not able to erase scars. However, they attempt to achieve minimal scarring with their advanced surgical technique and careful post-operative management. The prominence of the scar, its red color and firmness, are a function of a patient's genetics, age, skin type, health and maturity of the scar. Often, after repair of a laceration, the scar will appear very small for the initial 3 to 6 weeks, and may develop subsequent enlargement or hypertrophy. Young patients seem to make thicker scars, which will be red and raised. The scars may stay red and itch for six to twenty-four months after an injury. Older patients tend to make scars that are less reactive, which mature more quickly and are less visible. Ultimately, we cannot predict or control the end result: **we can only attempt to influence the final outcome of the scar.**



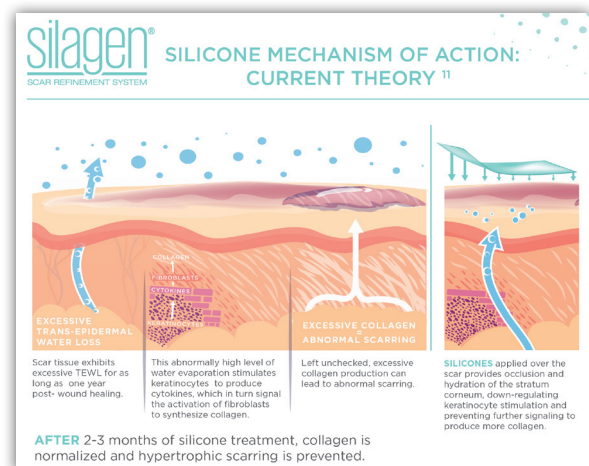
**Laser Treatments** can also help improve the appearance of scars. We recommend a fractional CO2 laser to treat thickened or raised scars and V-Beam laser to treat redness of scars. Most patients will need a series of 4-8 laser treatments to get the best results. This will help soften and flatten the scar. Dr. Crofts patients receive a discount to Aesthetica Medical Spa and Laser Center for these laser treatments.

Scar revision usually is not attempted for a minimum of 4-6 months after injury or surgery at the earliest. Sometimes it may take 2 years for a scar to fully heal. During this maturation phase much improvement occurs. Sun exposure while the scar is red can lead to permanent hyperpigmentation. Use of sunblock will prevent most hyperpigmentation that is associated with sun exposure. An SPF 30 or greater sunblock agent should be used. Our spa has several medical-grade sunscreen options for you to choose from. Patience and consistent hard work is required to optimize scars.

In some cases the physician may instruct the patient to massage a scar to decrease the likelihood of hypertrophy or forming contractures. Typically, 2 to 4 fifteen minute massage episodes per day over 1-2 months will have the greatest impact. This is typically done in conjunction with vitamin E oil. **Vitamin E oil** can be rubbed into the scar. Other scars respond to pressure therapy in which **compression** is applied directly over the scar.

**Silicone Sheeting** can also be applied to a scar to help influence its outcome. This helps soften the scar and may decrease itching and redness.

**Scar Gel** is an advanced silicone treatment for minimizing the appearance of scars.



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