



## Scar Care

The ultimate goal of scar care is to end up with the least visible scar possible. The way to achieve this is by reducing trans-epidermal water loss. We want to keep the moisture in the scar while applying pressure at the same time to keep the scar flat. There are multiple ways to help attain this goal and below will provide you with different options to help you through your scar care journey. To achieve great results, consistency is key! You will start your regimen for the first 3 months when your physician has given you the go-ahead and your steri-strips have been removed. At Portland Plastic Surgery Group, we want to give you the best options possible so you can choose the method that meets your scar care goals.

### **Paper Tape -**

Paper tape is the most tried and true form of scar care. It is extremely effective and has been used longer than any other method of scar care. It can help reduce the possibility of scars becoming raised and is effective in applying gentle and constant pressure to the incision, protecting, and supporting the wound. Paper tape also has the advantage of providing UV protection while in the healing phase. You can get paper tape at almost any drug store or in the first-aid section of the grocery store.

#### Application:

- Ensure the scar area is clean, dry, and free from creams, lotions, ointments, and powders as these will make the adhesive come off the tape.
- Apply the paper tape firmly with it running in the same direction and covering the entirety of the scar. If you have questions regarding application, please be sure to ask.
- Your skin will produce oil and it will naturally come off somewhere between 5 – 7 days.
  - If the paper tape does not lift off on its own after day seven, you will need to remove the tape yourself. When removing the tape, be sure you are holding the skin tight with one hand while removing the tape with the other hand pulling in the same



direction of your hair growth. Tape adhesive removers can be beneficial at the time, just be careful of your incision(s).

- When the paper tape is removed, you should cleanse the area with gentle soap and pat it dry. You can then apply an emollient moisturizer to the area surrounding the incision but not over the incision itself. Let the incision breathe for 24 hours.
  - Gentle Soap: EltaMD Foaming Cleanser is recommended and can be purchased in our office.
  - Emollient Moisturizer: EltaMD Moisturizer is recommended and can be purchased in our office.
- The following day, after showering and cleansing the incision area and it is dry, you can reapply the paper tape to the scar again. Repeat the “6 days on, 1 day off” routine until your provider advises you otherwise.

If you have any itching, redness, or irritation where the tape is applied to the skin, please call the office at (503) 292-9200. You may be slightly allergic to the adhesive, and we may recommend either 3M blue silicone tape (mentioned below) or Silagen.

### **3M Blue Silicone Kind Removal Tape -**

The Blue “Kind Removal” Tape by 3M has the same theory behind it as the paper tape. The goal is to keep trans-epidermal water loss from occurring and have pressure on the scar to keep it taut and flat, which can help prevent keloid scars. The great thing about the “Kind Removal” tape is the fact that it has silicone in it which is gentler on the skin and for some, may be more comfortable to wear. There have been multiple studies showing proof that silicone can help decrease the appearance of scarring. Although there is silicone in the “Kind Removal” tape, it is not 100% medical-grade silicone. It is a fantastic option if the paper tape is irritating your skin or if you just can’t tolerate the paper tape. You can purchase blue tape at our facility or on Amazon.

Application:



- Follow the same application rules as the paper tape.
  - If the blue tape does not lift off on its own after day seven, you will need to remove the tape yourself and let the incision breathe for 24 hours. Clean the incision, apply moisturizer, and make sure you are sleeping in/on a clean surface.
- After 24 hours, clean the incision area and reapply the blue tape.

### **Silagen: Silicone Scar Gel and Silicone Sheeting -**

Silagen is a 100% medical-grade silicone product that comes in the form of silicone gel, silicone gel with SPF, and silicone tapes. Using silicone for scarring is a newer technology for scar care, but it has proven to be a highly effective way to treat scarring, and most patients find it to be the most comfortable route. The Silagen creates a barrier over your scar that increases hydration in the outer layer of your skin (preventing that trans-epidermal water loss that was mentioned earlier). The increase in hydration will help stop excessive collagen buildup. This also helps with the overall appearance of the scar and helps keep the scar flat. Using Silagen with SPF will help prevent the scar from hyperpigmentation, which is usually a permanent darkening of the scar caused by sun exposure.

If Silagen Scar Care sounds like the option for you, please stop by the front desk and schedule a 15-minute phone call with our advanced aesthetician. She will inform you which products will work best following your procedure and explain the proper way to apply the gel and the tapes.

## **Alternative Scar Care Options**

There are other treatments in the office that we can use to help lighten/diminish the appearance of scars. Those treatments include but are not limited to Sylfirm X Radio Frequency Microneedling, PlasmaPen, Laser Resurfacing, and Traditional Microneedling. If you would like to know more about these treatments, please schedule a complimentary consultation with our advanced esthetician.



## **Sylfirm X Radio Frequency Microneedling -**

Sylfirm X is a type of radiofrequency (RF) microneedling technology that combines microneedling with radiofrequency energy. This combination offers several advantages for scar reduction, making it a promising treatment option. Below are some reasons why Sylfirm X radiofrequency microneedling is considered effective for reducing scars.

- **Dual Mechanism of Action:** Sylfirm X combines the benefits of microneedling and radiofrequency. Microneedling creates controlled micro-injuries in the skin, stimulating the natural healing process, while radiofrequency delivers thermal energy to deeper layers, promoting collagen production. This dual mechanism enhances the overall effectiveness of the treatment.
- **Collagen Induction:** Radiofrequency energy heats the dermal layers of the skin, leading to collagen stimulation. Collagen is a crucial protein for maintaining skin elasticity and structure. By promoting collagen induction, Sylfirm X helps remodel scar tissue, improving its texture and reducing the appearance of scars.
- **Precise Energy Delivery:** Sylfirm X uses microneedles to deliver radiofrequency energy directly into the targeted areas of the skin. This precise energy delivery allows for controlled treatment, minimizing damage to surrounding tissues while maximizing the impact on scar tissue.
- **Versatility for Various Scars:** Sylfirm X is suitable for various types of scars, including acne scars, surgical scars, and stretch marks. The combination of microneedling and radiofrequency addresses both textural irregularities and pigmentation concerns associated with scars.
- **Minimized Downtime:** Compared to more aggressive treatments, Sylfirm X generally has a shorter downtime. The micro-injuries created by microneedles are superficial, allowing for a quicker recovery period while still achieving significant results.



- **Safe for Different Skin Types:** Radiofrequency microneedling, including Sylfirm X, is generally safe for different skin types and tones. It poses a lower risk of pigmentation changes, making it suitable for a diverse range of individuals.
- **Enhanced Skin Tightening:** The radiofrequency component of Sylfirm X not only stimulates collagen production but also contributes to skin tightening. This can be beneficial for scars that may be associated with laxity or atrophic changes.
- **Reduced Risk of Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation:** Sylfirm X's precise energy delivery and controlled nature make it a suitable option for individuals with a higher risk of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. This is especially important for those with darker skin tones.

### **Intense Pulse Light (IPL) Therapy -**

IPL, or Intense Pulsed Light therapy, is a non-invasive cosmetic procedure that uses pulses of light to treat various skin issues, including minimizing scars. Below are some ways in which IPL can be helpful in reducing the appearance of scars.

- **Stimulation of Collagen Production:** IPL stimulates the production of collagen, a protein that is essential for maintaining the skin's elasticity and texture. By promoting collagen growth, IPL can help improve the appearance of scars, making them less noticeable over time.
- **Reduction of Pigmentation:** IPL can target and reduce hyperpigmentation caused by scars. This is particularly beneficial for scars that are darker or redder in color, as the light energy is absorbed by the pigmented cells, breaking them down and leading to a more even skin tone.
- **Enhanced Blood Circulation:** IPL improves blood circulation in the treated area, which can aid in the healing process. Improved circulation helps deliver nutrients and oxygen to the scar tissue, promoting faster healing and minimizing the appearance of scars.



- **Reduction of Vascular Lesions:** For scars that are red or have a vascular component, such as those caused by surgery or injury, IPL can target and reduce the appearance of blood vessels in the scar tissue. This can help in making the scars less noticeable.
- **Minimization of Raised Scars:** IPL can also be used to address raised or hypertrophic scars. By promoting collagen remodeling and reducing excess tissue, IPL can contribute to flattening raised scars and making them less prominent.

It's important to note that while IPL can be effective for certain types of scars, results can vary from person to person. Additionally, multiple sessions may be required to achieve the desired outcome.

### **Non-Ablative Laser Resurfacing -**

Non-ablative laser resurfacing is a cosmetic procedure that utilizes laser energy to improve the appearance of the skin, including scar reduction. Unlike ablative laser resurfacing, which removes the outer layer of skin, non-ablative lasers work by penetrating the skin without causing visible damage. Laser resurfacing is similar to IPL in that both treatments stimulate collagen and elastin production, reduce pigmentation, help reduce vascularity and redness in the scar, and help improve texture by remodeling excess tissue and improving the overall appearance of the scar.

### **Traditional Microneedling -**

Microneedling is a cosmetic procedure that involves the use of a device with fine needles to create tiny punctures in the skin. Microneedling addresses the same issues as IPL and laser resurfacing but also has added benefits such as:

- **Versatility for Various Scars:** Microneedling is suitable for various types of scars, including acne scars, surgical scars, and stretch marks. It can be customized to address specific concerns based on the size, depth, and location of the scars.
- **Safe for Different Skin Types:** Microneedling is considered safe for different skin types and tones. It poses a lower risk of pigmentation changes, making it a versatile option for a wide range of individuals.



- **Improvement in Texture and Elasticity:** Over a series of sessions, microneedling can lead to an improvement in the overall texture and elasticity of the skin. This can result in a smoother, more supple appearance, reducing the visibility of scars.

### **Multi-Modality Approach -**

A multi-modality approach to scar reduction, combining treatments like IPL, laser resurfacing, and microneedling, can be beneficial because each method targets different aspects of scar appearance and works synergistically to enhance overall results. Below are some reasons why a multi-modality approach can be advantageous.

- **Comprehensive Treatment:** Different types of scars may respond better to specific treatments. For example, hyperpigmentation might be effectively addressed with IPL, while laser resurfacing could target textural irregularities. Microneedling, on the other hand, can promote collagen induction and improve overall skin texture. Using a combination allows for a more comprehensive approach, addressing multiple aspects of scar appearance simultaneously.
- **Customization for Individual Needs:** Each person's skin and scar type are unique. A combination of treatments allows for a customized approach based on the specific characteristics of the scars and the individual's skin condition. This tailoring of treatments can lead to more effective and personalized results.
- **Collagen Stimulation:** Both laser resurfacing and microneedling are effective in stimulating collagen production. Combining these treatments can synergistically enhance collagen remodeling, leading to improved skin texture, elasticity, and a reduction in the visibility of scars.
- **Texture Improvement:** Laser resurfacing and microneedling both contribute to improving the texture of the skin. While laser resurfacing may focus on more aggressive textural changes, microneedling can address finer details. Combining these modalities helps achieve a smoother and more refined skin surface.



- **Optimized Pigmentation Reduction:** IPL is particularly effective in reducing hyperpigmentation associated with scars. Combining IPL with other treatments like laser resurfacing and microneedling can optimize the reduction of pigmentation irregularities, leading to a more even skin tone.
- **Tailored Recovery Periods:** Different treatments may have varying downtime and recovery periods. Combining modalities allows for a more strategic scheduling of treatments, minimizing overall downtime while maximizing the benefits of each approach.
- **Versatility for Scar Types:** Scars can vary in type and characteristics. A multi-modality approach allows for flexibility in addressing different scar types, including acne scars, surgical scars, and stretch marks.
- **Enhanced and Long-Lasting Results:** By combining treatments that complement each other, the overall results can be enhanced and longer lasting. For example, the collagen stimulated by microneedling can contribute to the sustained improvement in skin texture achieved through laser resurfacing.

### **Alternative Scar Care Treatment Cost -**

Costs are subject to change based on the recommended treatment strategy, scar dimensions, and the number of sessions required for optimal outcomes. To obtain a personalized treatment plan, it is recommended to arrange a consultation with our esthetician.