



Tuality Orthopedic, Sports, Spine & Rehabilitation Center

A member of the Tuality Healthcare family.

Gentle Massage for scar tissue

Is Scar Tissue Permanent?

Scar tissue is not a permanent fixture in the body. After scar tissue forms and healing has taken place, the scar needs to be remodeled so that it can tolerate the stress and forces that the body may encounter throughout each day. The remodeling process is essential to ensure that normal range of motion, strength, and mobility are restored to the injured tissue.

Scar Management Techniques

If you have developed scar tissue after injury or surgery, your physical therapist may perform scar massage on the injured tissue in order to help with the remodeling process. He or she may also instruct you or a family member in the proper scar massage technique.

Be sure to check with your doctor or physical therapist to ensure that proper healing has taken place and that scar tissue massage is appropriate. Massaging a scar that is not fully healed can cause damage to the developing scar tissue and this can delay healing. In general, the scar must be fully closed and no scabbing present to begin scar massage. Again, your doctor and physical therapist should assess your scar before beginning scar massage.

Lubrication

Usually a small amount of lubrication is used during scar massage. This can be vitamin E oil and or cocoa butter. This is used to keep the scar and skin pliable and soft.

Cross Friction Massage

One effective method of scar massage is called cross friction or transverse friction massage. This involves using one or two fingers to massage your scar in a direction that is perpendicular to the line of the scar. This technique helps to remodel the scar and ensures that the collagen fibers of the scar are aligned properly. Cross friction massage is commonly used in the treatment of tendonitis and muscle strains or ligament sprains. The technique is performed for five to ten minutes. If instructed to do so, you may be able to perform scar massage on yourself two to three times per day.