

SUTURE REMOVAL

AFTER SUTURE REMOVAL INSTRUCTIONS

If Steri Strips have been applied, try to keep them dry. It generally takes 3-5 days for Steri Strips to come off on their own. They will start to lift at the edges and you may trim them but do not remove them. After they come off, follow these steps.

If Steri Strips have not been applied or after they have come off, wash the area every day. Continue to use the Petrolatum ointment (or Vaseline or Aquaphor) to the area twice daily. If desired, you may put a band-aid on the area. This may be done for another week after the sutures have been removed. Then your regular skin care regime can be restarted (including using make-up and sunscreen).

MASSAGE

Two week after the sutures have been removed, massage the scar should be started as well as any scar therapy. Massage helps break up the scar (after the initial 3 weeks of healing). Place one or two fingers on the scar line and massage in circles for 5 minutes three to four times per day.

SCAR THERAPIES

There are several scar therapies available. Silicon Gel Sheeting has many studies showing good results. Silicon Gel Sheeting comes as a bandage form or a cream. The bandage form comes as a large sheet, which can be cut to fit the size of the area. Usually one sheet can be used to cut several circles (or rectangles). They stay on the area for 24 hours. Then the area is cleansed and the silicon gel sheeting reapplied. For scars located on the face, silicon gel creams can be applied twice a day to the area.



SCARS

Scars improve with time. Generally a scar needs 12 full months to completely heal. The redness of all scars will fade with time. Often blood vessels may develop around the scar. These can be treated with a laser. If the scar is bumpy, it may have developed excess scar tissue (a hypertrophic or keloid scar) and need to be treated. Make a follow up appointment with your surgeon if you think your scar has not healed appropriately.