

NICHOLAS T. HADDOCK, M.D.

Wound Care and Scar Management

General Information

The scar that you see is the result of a process the skin goes through as it recovers. There are many factors that impact how a scar will look. 90% of how you heal is determined by your genetic makeup and 10% by your surgeon. Dr. Haddock, as a plastic surgeon, will take great care in suturing the skin as well as hiding the scar as much as possible. Our goal is to make any scar as small and discreet as possible.

The Science of Wound Healing

There are three distinct stages to healing. Your scar will change as it progresses through the various phases. The first phase, the inflammatory stage, begins immediately following surgery and lasts a few days. During this time, the bleeding stops and the white blood cells come to the site to initiate healing and prevent infection. The wound at this point looks red or pink and swollen. The second phase, the proliferative stage, begins a few days after surgery and can last six weeks. During this phase collagen is produced and the scar gains strength. The scar can look pink or red and swollen during this phase. The final stage, the remodeling stage, begins approximately six weeks after surgery and can last for up to 18 months.

Scar Management

Dr. Haddock's goal is to optimize each phase of wound healing to give you the best possible long-term result.

- 1) Initially Dr. Haddock will place skin glue or Steri-Strips over the incision. These will typically stay on for two to four weeks. Once this has fallen off scar management begins.
- 2) During the proliferative phase once all wounds have healed you can begin Silicone Gel sheeting. The Silicone Gel sheeting can be purchased online and may last for four to eight weeks. A brochure is available in our office to help you with this. These sheets will help flatten your scar if used as directed for 8 to 12 weeks. Application should be daily for 10 to 12 hours.
- 3) Bio-Oil can be applied to the skin around the scar after surgery. It can also be applied to the scar once it is completely dry and healed. It should be gently massaged into the scar twice daily for 3 months. It can be purchased at standard drug stores.
- 4) During the remodeling phase, after 6 to 8 weeks or once the scar is completely healed, a pinching scar massage can be begun. This is especially helpful for raised scars.
- 5) Throughout this process it is very important to minimize sun exposure. Apply SPF > 30 to the scar. Remember to reapply based on package instructions. This should be continued until the scar has completely remodeled or for 12 to 18 months.
- 6) If you are not satisfied with your scar a scar revision can be considered at approximately 1 year after surgery.