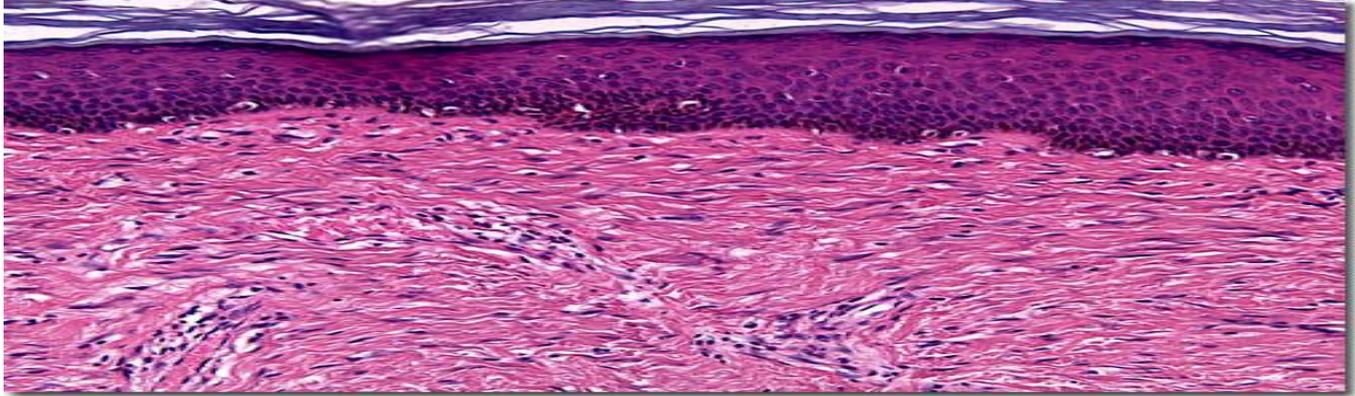


PATIENT INFORMATION - SCAR MANAGEMENT

Looking after your scar is essential to a successful result after surgery.



Muscles and tendons are aligned parallel to each other so they can lengthen and shorten as you move your hand. Scar tissue does not form in such an organised way. As such, tendons are prevented to glide normally due to being 'stuck' in scar tissue. The aim of scar management is to make a scar that is smooth, flat, soft and that moves easily.

THE PROCESS OF SCARRING

A scar becomes fully mature about 2 years after the initial injury. As it heals, the scar goes through different cellular changes. Between 6 to 12 weeks is when most of the scar healing occurs. As there is an increase in activity during this time, your scar may 'overheal'. There are 2 types of this:

HYPERTROPHIC SCAR

Is a scar that has become raised and thickened during the healing process due to increased collagen deposition. The scar remains within the boundaries of the wound. There are some factors that may predispose a person to forming a hypertrophic scar.

- a wound that takes more than 3 weeks to close
- younger age due to a faster healing rate
- dark, Asian, or Hispanic populations due to skin composition
- deep wounds

KELOID SCAR

Is a scar that extends beyond the boundaries of the original wound. Its appearance is similar to that of a hypertrophic scar. It is more common in people with a family history of keloid scars.

How can Hand Therapy help? There are many things you can do to assist with the formation of a functional scar. Your Hand Therapist is skilled in the treatment and management of all scars, whether they are the result of surgery or trauma. Please discuss any questions or concerns you have directly with us.

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