

## What are the Benefits of Regular Scar Massage?

Scar massage can result in the following benefits:

- ✓ Encourage wound healing
- ✓ Reduction in adhesions
- ✓ Reduction in itching
- ✓ Desensitisation & sensory re-education
- ✓ Increase in joint range of motion (ROM)

To learn more about scar massage, please contact an Occupational Therapist at TTSH Rehabilitation Centre during office hours (Monday – Friday, 8.30 pm – 5.30 pm).

Training will be provided to ensure the scar massage is carried out properly.

### TTSH Rehabilitation Centre

17 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 9,  
Singapore 569766

#### Contact:

6450 6182 / 6450 6183 / 6450 6270

Department of  
**OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY**

## Scar Massage





## How do Wounds Heal?

Wound healing typically goes through the following phases:

### Phase 1: Inflammation

- It is the body's way of removing devitalised tissue (dead tissue), debris and foreign substances in response to an injury.
- This phase usually lasts over 5 days for a clean wound, but may last longer for an infected wound.
- You may experience swelling, redness and/or pain.

### Phase 2: Fibroplasia

- During this phase, fibroblasts, which are responsible for the production of collagen, elastin and proteases, grow in the wound while inflammation cells decrease.
- The skin starts to rebuild as new capillaries form to carry blood and nutrients to regenerate new skin at the wound site.
- This phase usually lasts 2 to 6 weeks.

### Phase 3: Scar Maturation

- During this phase, the new tissue matures.
- The scar gradually loses its red appearance as blood vessels that are no longer needed are removed through apoptosis (cell death).
- This phase varies depending on the depth and size of the wound, and may last up to several years.
- A fully matured scar is flat and close to the colour of your skin tone. An immature scar may be raised, red and darker than your skin tone.

## When Should I Start the Scar Massage?

You are advised to start scar massages during the fibroplasia phase.

You may stop scar massages when the scar has fully matured.

## What is the Recommended Duration and Frequency of Each Scar Massage?

The duration of massage depends on your tolerance levels and the size of the wound.

A general guideline is approximately 10 minutes, at least twice and up to four times a day.

## How Should I Perform the Scar Massage?

The scar massage should be applied:

- Perpendicular to the scar with firm pressure moving away from the scar
- In small circular motions (clockwise or anti-clockwise) with firm pressure

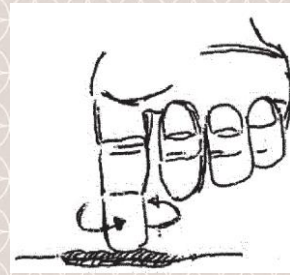
You may use your thumb, or one or two fingers depending on the size of the scar.

### NOTE:

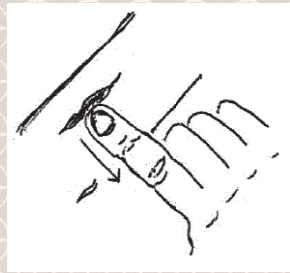
Creams should be used to prevent injurious friction and superficial tissue damage. Oil-based creams are recommended as they are not rapidly absorbed into the skin, providing better lubrication.

Only gentle massage should be performed on newly-healed or recently adherent grafts.

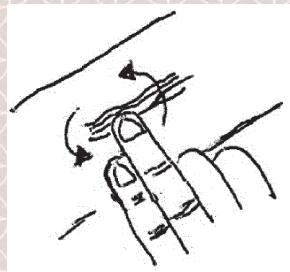
Avoid performing scar massage on fragile skin and open wounds.



**Firm pressure is applied on the scar in small circular motions with one finger**



**Firm pressure is applied perpendicular to and moving away from the scar**



**Firm pressure is applied on the scar and areas surrounding the scar in small circular motions with two fingers**