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Scars - Options & Treatments

Scars come in many forms, including hyperpigmented (dark), hypertrophic (thick), keloids, red/pink, and arising from trauma and burns.

Treatment is divided into non-surgical and surgical options.

Non-surgical options include (1) steroid application and injection, (2) silicone gel sheets; and (3) laser intervention of various energies and types.

Surgical options include (1) local tissue re-arrangement (2) tissue expansion; (3) skin grafting; (4) dermabrasion; and (5) autogenous fat grafting.

One cause of thickened (hypertrophic) scars is undue tension.

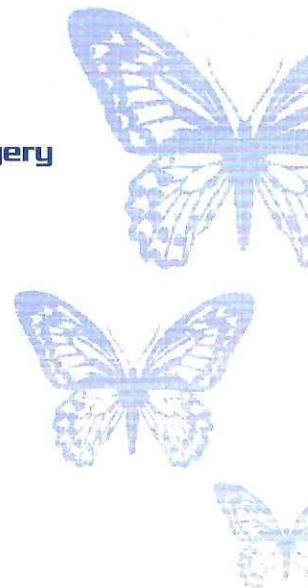
Tissue rearrangement acts to lengthen scars and relieve tension, allowing more optimal results. This technique can be utilized to include contractures, contour, or areas of tightness.

Tissue expansion involves a balloon being placed between normal adjacent skin, used to stretch the normal skin over a period of time by filling the tissue expander with a saline solution. Over weeks to months the skin is progressively expanded and the scar is subsequently surgically removed. The expanded (stretched) skin is utilized to close the scar defect.

Skin grafting can be utilized by taking a thin layer of skin from a healthy part of the body, which is transplanted into the zone of trauma.

Dermabrasion can be utilized to smooth out surface irregularities by removing the outermost layer of skin. This is performed by utilizing a mechanical device such as a wheel or rotating wire brush until the desired depth is realized.

Finally, autogenous fat grafting utilizing the patient's own tissue can be utilized in the transfer to an affected area which has become depressed or sunken.



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