



POST-OP INSTRUCTIONS: SCAR MASSAGE AFTER BREAST SURGERY

It is important to massage and mobilize your scar to restore normal mobility of the skin and underlying tissues following your breast surgery. You can make a difference by helping your scar move more freely and making the scar thinner and smaller. Also, if your scar moves more freely, this will help avoid any limitation of future movement. You may begin massaging the scar when it is well healed (all the scabs have fallen off naturally). Be sure to start gently with the massage and progress to a deeper but comfortable pressure. You should never feel sharp, stabbing pain — slight discomfort, as in a pulling or slight burning sensation, is common.

Technique

- Set aside a few minutes a day to perform the scar massage/mobilization. Sit in a comfortable chair or lie down.
- Use the pads of 2-3 fingers held together, slightly arched, and keep them in contact with the area you are massaging. Do not slide across the skin.
- Do not use lotion or oil during the massage because it will cause your fingers to slide around. You can apply lotion after the massage.
- Do the following technique, starting with light pressure and then progressing to firmer pressure:
 - Start at one end of the scar with fingers as described above
 - Move the skin under your fingers parallel to the scar on each side. Repeat 3-5 times each section.
 - Move the skin under your fingers in a circular stroke (clockwise and counterclockwise) on each side of the scar. Repeat 3-5 times each section.
 - You may notice one or two directions that may feel “stuck.” Spend a little more time in those directions.