

Massage and moisturiser

Overview

Massage and Moisturising are two commonly used modalities for ongoing treatment of hypertrophic scars.

Massage assists in breaking up collagen bundles, and soften the developing scar tissue.

Moisturiser aims to keep the skin hydrated and support with the friction of the massage. Selected moisturiser should be non-irritant, fragrance free and water based (such as sorbolene)

The therapeutic nature of massage and moisturiser may assist with reducing client's hypersensitivity, itch and pain associated with their scars, and can affect their psychological wellbeing by improving mood and reducing feelings of anxiety.

Prior to commencing massage

- Use gloves as a universal precaution
- Consider the client's dermatological history, and preference to moisturisers to avoid potential skin reactions.
- Massage and moisturiser should **NOT** be used on fragile or broken skin, or if the scar is inflamed.

Frequency and length of massage

- The client and/or family member can assist in ensuring massage is completed twice a day.
- Build up to 10 minute sessions
- Ensure the pressure on the skin is enough to blanch but **NOT** to sheer, which can lead to breakdown and blisters

Scar massage techniques

Technique of choice may depend on the scar. Minimal moisturiser is needed, as excessive amounts can build up on the skin and result in folliculitis and skin breakdown

- Applying moisturiser in a circular motion over the scar combines cutaneous hydration and mobilisation. This is commonly used on newer, contracted or “sticky” scars.
- Increased pressure from fingers, or using the knuckles to apply a deeper force assists with older, more resistant scars
- A “pinch and roll” method is useful for older, thickened and raised scars
- A longitudinal massage technique along the line of contracting scar helps with lengthening the tissue and can be incorporated into stretches.

Caution

- If the scar become inflamed, breaks down or becomes blistered, cease massage immediately.

Tips

- In summer months, refrigerate the moisturiser. This assists with the cooling effect on the skin, and can minimise itch.
- Remove excess moisturiser to the skin prior to putting garments or contact media on
- ***Educating your client on massage techniques is key to them becoming independent with completing their own therapy program.***

Contact Details

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