

BEST TREATMENTS FOR SCARRING

Dermatologists most commonly perform scar procedures for acne and surgical scar revision.

Dr Adrian Lim, dermatologist, Fellow of Australasian College of Dermatologists (ACD) says: “Scarring remains a challenging condition with a variety of repair methods available, including a few more options for darker skinned individuals.”

Some people are at a higher risk of developing scars including those with:

- a history of keloid scarring
- a family history of scars
- severe acne
- darker skin
- have had a procedure conducted in “high tension” areas such as the chest and shoulders.

Acne scar revision is a specialised field of procedural and laser dermatology.

Dr Russell Hills, dermatologist and Fellow of the ACD says: “There are many different types of acne scars requiring a patient specific approach. Surgical techniques such as punch elevation and excision or subcision may be performed before laser resurfacing or fractional laser treatment. Multiple treatments are often required, particularly for severe scarring. It is generally not possible to remove all scarring but the appearance can be softened and the scars less noticeable.”

Surgical scar revision is best carried out after removal of sutures. Techniques such as taping, silicone sheeting and gel, coupled with vascular or ablative fractionated lasers, can reduce scarring.

Dr Hills says: “Some scars, because of their position or shape, may be best managed by a formal surgical scar revision, whereby the scar is excised and sutured. Sometimes laser is used after the sutures are removed to help blend the revised area with the surrounding skin. Redness in scars often fades slowly over time, though vascular laser can help speed this process up, but multiple treatments are required for improvement.”

Raised scars known as hypertrophic and keloid scars can be treated with steroid injected directly into the scar. This is a slow process requiring repeated injections.

Dr Lim says: “Dermatologists are well positioned to deal with all types of scarring, having both procedural and laser expertise.”

ENDS

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OF DERMATOLOGISTS

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The ACD is the peak medical college accredited by the Australian Medical Council for the training and professional development of medical practitioners in the specialty of dermatology. They provide authoritative information about dermatology to Government, the media, other health professionals and the general public.

Media enquiries:

For more information, images, or to arrange an interview with a dermatologist, please contact:

Roshan Lewis
Marketing and Communications Specialist
Australasian College of Dermatologists
+61 2 8741 4150
+61 490 419 477
roshan@dermcoll.edu.au