

# Caring for your scar

As your wound is healing, scar tissue is being formed. This scar will need care as it takes between 18 months and 2 years before it is fully healed. During this time the scar could become red, hard and raised, or it might become tight. Frequent massaging of the area can reduce these complications.

Please use the following instructions:

- Wash the affected area as normal, unless otherwise instructed.
- Wash and dry your hands.
- Apply small amounts of lubricating eye ointment which has been prescribed by your doctor or can be bought over the counter at the chemist.
- Massage the lubricating eye ointment firmly around and over the scar as much as possible every day, but without making the skin sore. The nurse will show you how to do this.

Do not worry if the ointment goes into your eye.

Occasionally patients could be intolerant to the ointment. This can cause itching, redness and swelling. If you know that you are intolerant to any antibiotic or cream, please tell the nurse caring for you. If you have any of these symptoms, please contact us on the number below so that a different ointment can be prescribed.

There are some anti-scarring creams available that can be applied to the wound/scar and help to reduce visible scarring. These anti-scar creams are silicone based and whilst their action is not fully understood they can, in some individuals, be very effective. Good examples include Kelocoat (Alliance Pharma) and Dermatrix (Hanson Medical), although there may be others available on the market. If you require further information, please discuss with the nurse practitioner or your pharmacist.

**Remember to wash the area as normal to prevent any build-up of ointment.**

It is advisable to use a high factor sun screen on the scar such as total sun block, as it might be more susceptible to sunburn for the next two years. It is advisable that you continue to use sun block on the scar after this time, whenever exposed to strong sunlight.

If you are worried or wish to ask any questions about this information, please contact the Oculoplastic nurse practitioner via the hospital switchboard on: (0161) 276 1234 and ask the operator to bleep 5235 or 5605 Monday–Friday 9.00 am - 5.00 pm or contact staff on Ward 55 on (0161) 276 5512 (24 hour) every day.

