

CHAD PURNELL M.D.

CRANIOFACIAL AND PLASTIC SURGERY

Postoperative care instructions Scar Massage and Scar Care

To start two weeks after surgery, and once cleared by Dr. Purnell at your postoperative visit:

Anytime an incision is made on the skin, there will be a scar. To get the best final outcome for a scar, there are three things to do:

1. Apply silicone.

- After 2 weeks, you should apply a silicone-containing product to the incision. Ideally, this should be on the incision as close to 24 hours a day as possible. This can be done for up to a year if you want to give the absolute best result. Silicone comes in the form of sheets or gels.
- Sheets can be left on the incision, removed for bathing, and then re-applied. You can rinse the silicone sheet and re-use it until it has lost its stickiness.
- Silicone gels or ointments go on an incision like antibiotic ointment would.
- You can buy silicone in the drugstore or from Amazon – my favorite types are listed at the end of this sheet. Or, we will provide it to you at our office.

2. Apply Sunscreen.

- Scars can get tan just like the rest of your skin, but scars tend not to lighten after they become tan. For the first year after an incision is made, it should be covered with sunscreen or protected from the sun by a hat or dressing. Any sunscreen is ok. Some expensive silicone gels have sunscreen built in so you don't have to apply both types of ointment. Silicone does not need to be on the incision if you are applying the sunscreen.

3. Perform Scar Massage.

- At the time of applying the silicone ointment or sunscreen (or 3 times a day) apply gentle pressure to the scar (just enough to blanch the red color to white) and massage the scar LONGITUDINALLY for 2-3 minutes (in the long direction of the scar, not across the scar). This can be done as much as tolerated.

My favorite silicone brands: (click names to buy on Amazon)

[Scar Guard Repair Liquid](#) – this is a brush on silicone that goes on like nail polish – it is good for scars under kids clothing or in areas where ointment frequently gets rubbed off.

[Bio-Corneum](#) – This silicone has built-in SPF30 sunscreen, but it is one of the more expensive ointments.

[Kelo-Cote](#) – This is a more inexpensive silicone gel

[Cica-care silicone Sheet](#) – If you prefer silicone sheets instead of gel. Remember this can be cut into small pieces and re-used so a single sheet should last a very long time.