

# SCAR WARS

TIME HEALS ALL WOUNDS, BUT CAN THE SAME BE SAID FOR THE SCARS? SCARS HAVE THE POWER TO REMIND US OF OUR PAST. THEY AFFECT ALL SKIN TYPES, REGARDLESS OF ETHNICITY, OR AGE, AND CAN FORM ANYWHERE ON YOUR BODY OR FACE. NO TWO SCARS ARE EXACTLY ALIKE, THEY COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES, WITH VARYING CHARACTERISTICS.



BY DR. THERESA ARNOLD

Chances are you have more than one scar on your body, and most likely it does not bother you, however, not everyone is so lucky.

For some of us scars may mean physical, aesthetic, psychological, and social consequences that may be associated with substantial emotional and financial costs. In some instances scars are associated with a painful memory, or a bad experience that can lower the self-esteem. Especially when located on the face or another visible location.

How your scar will appear when healed is determined by several factors:

- Size and depth of the incision or wound
- Location of the wound on the body
- Blood supply to the area
- Type, colour, and thickness of the individual's skin tone
- Direction of the scar
- Age of your skin.
- Medications you are taking.

The good news is there is something we can do to help their appearance. Scar treatments are everywhere. But what really is the key to better healing? Chemist aisles, print and TV media beckon with "clinically proven, doctor-recommended" products that promise to minimise or remove your scars.

According to the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology, the only thing really shown to help the skin healing process and minimise the appearance of a scar, is keeping the wound moist and covered. While most scar products will do that and help your skin heal, they will not, however, erase your scar.

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Below are listed several types of common scars to help you identify yours.

## 1. ATROPHIC SCARS

Atrophic scars are depressed, serrated or flat against the upper layer of the skin. These types of scars can be hypo pigmented (whiter) or hyperpigmented (darker skin pigmentation compared to other areas) in appearance.

## 2. HYPERTROPHIC SCARS

Elevated and raised. Hypertrophic scars occur when excessive tissue develops over the injury. These scars some similarities in characteristics and appearance with Keloid scars; however, they main difference is they only on the areas of injury.

## 3. KELOID SCARS

Keloid scars form when the skin goes through an aggressive healing phase resulting in a clustered and thick scar that appears raised, darker than the surrounding skin. Keloids are caused by injuries, particularly when the body secretes excess collagen on the affected area, even after the original wound has healed and closed.

## 4. SCAR CONTRACTURES

A scar contracture is the result of a contractile wound-healing process occurring in a scar that has already been re-epithelialized and adequately healed, for example burn scars. These scars are tight and may affect movement and flexibility.

## 5. STRETCH MARKS

The skin tears, particularly on the buttocks, thighs and breast areas when a person grows or shrinks too fast. New stretch marks tend to look red or purple in color, but typically lighter or silver. Genetics plays a major roll.

## 6. ACNE SCARS/ICEPICK SCARS

There are various forms of acne scars, that differ in their type and depth.

## POSSIBLE WAYS TO TREAT SCARS

There are a great many treatments available for various kinds of scars, ranging from over-the-counter remedies to clinical treatment options. Once your scar type has been identified, your dermatologist can find the proper treatment that is best suited for your scars and skin type. Several scar treatments options are outlined below;

- Electrosurgery and steroid injections
- Dermal Pigmentation/medical micropigmentation
- Fractional laser resurfacing
- SWT
- Surgery

At my clinics on the Gold Coast and in San Francisco I use the Dermal Pigmentation method to treat scarring. This procedure is done by depositing small amounts of flesh toned translucent media pigments under the skin leaving, in order to re-mimic natural skin tones. The aim of re-pigmenting a scar is to diminish the visibility of the scar with regard to the adjacent healthy skin. The translucent qualities allow surrounding skin to blend seemly resulting in a natural appearance. The procedure is minimally invasive, low risk and often described as painless by 95% of all patients.

Almost anyone is considered a good candidate, however scars must be 6 to 12months old. In rare cases, patients may be advised on other treatments such as laser/SWT treatment.

Types of scars you can treat effectively on the face and body with dermal pigments include, but are not limited to:

- Scar tissue resulting from plastic surgery; post-facelift scars and breast augmentation scars are very popular to conceal
- Self Harm scars
- Stretchmarks
- Hypertrophic scars (raised)
- Trauma scars
- Burn Scars
- Other Surgical Scars (MOHS, Thyroid Cancer)

Most procedures require several sessions, this is dependent on the area location and type of scar treated. Every patient will be advised upon consultation, as it varies from individual to individual. However, it generally takes between two to four sessions. The thickness and colour of the scar will influence the number of procedures required.

Above all, it is my aim to make patients feel as comfortable and relaxed as possible at our medical clinic, and to ensure they are aware of their options and form a realistic outcome of any treatment. We pride ourselves on patient care and experience, ensuring our patients' visit and treatment is as informative, comfortable and professional as possible.

FOR INFORMATION  
VISIT [www.dermink.com](http://www.dermink.com)  
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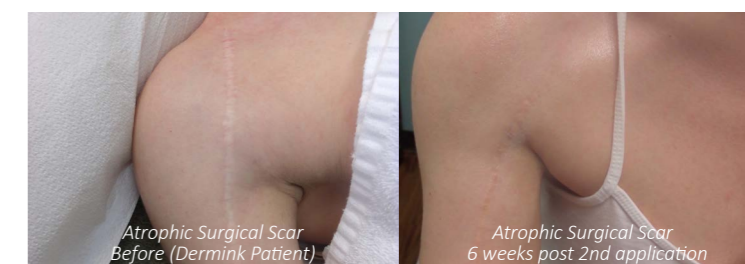
### EXAMPLE ACNE SCAR



Hypertrophic acne scar (Actual Patient)

Hypertrophic acne scar 6 weeks after second treatment.

### ATROPHIC SURGICAL SCAR



Atrophic Surgical Scar Before (Dermink Patient)

Atrophic Surgical Scar 6 weeks post 2nd application