

## How to Reduce Scar Formation

First, it is important to understand that all incisions leave scars. The degree of scarring is dependent on many factors that are out of our control such as age, genetics, and other medical conditions. Other factors that impede healing are smoking and sun exposure, and should be avoided. To speed healing and reduce scar formation follow these simple steps.

1. **Protect** your incision. Keep the incision clean and dry until it is healed on the surface, with no open areas or scabs. Then, protect the incision from the sun with at least 30 SPF sunscreen for the first year.
2. Use a **moisturizing lotion**. Keep the scar and surrounding tissues hydrated with a lotion. Use a moisturizing lotion without heavy perfumes or fragrances that contains vitamin E. Using expensive lotions like Mederma are not necessary.
3. **Massage** your scar. Manipulation of the scar increases blood flow and stimulates nerve endings. Once you have been seen for your post-operative visit, you can begin working with your scar. Using lotion and the tips of your fingers, rub in the lotion with firm pressure in all directions. Rub parallel and perpendicular to the scar and surrounding tissue in small circles and in straight lines. Do this 3-4 times a day.