

# Scars

## What are they?

A scar is the result of the skin's healing process and can follow skin surgery, piercings, injury, infections (such as chicken-pox and boils) and inflammation (such as acne and insect bites).

Scars can be pink/red, pale or dark. Scars can be flat, indented or raised. There is a type of raised scar called a keloid scar, which is a scar that continues to grow and can be itchy and/or painful. These are more common on earlobes and the upper body.

The type of scar depends on lots of factors, including your age, the location on your body, and your skin type. Most scars become less noticeable with time, but never completely go away.



## How can we treat them?

The goal of scar treatment is to make the scar feel and look better. Treatments do not make the scar disappear completely, but can help them fade more quickly and become less noticeable. Different treatment options are available for different scars.

Today you have been prescribed:

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## How do we prevent or reduce them?

- **WOUND CARE:** If you have a skin injury or surgery, follow your doctor's instructions closely for the best skin healing. This usually includes keeping the wound clean and covered.
- **PIERCINGS:** If you have a skin piercing, keep the area clean. If you notice a lump forming at the site of the piercing, check in with your local doctor.
- **SUN PROTECTION:** Using sunscreen and covering with clothing is important to prevent darkening of the scar.
- **SCAR MASSAGE:** Massaging the scar a few times each day with a moisturising cream or massage oil can help make it softer and flatter.
- **SILICONE GEL OR DRESSINGS:** Silicone products have been shown to reduce the thickness and redness of the scar; however, they need to be used regularly for many months.



## Notes

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## Want more information?

[dermnetnz.org](http://dermnetnz.org)

[dermcoll.edu.au/a-to-z-of-skin](http://dermcoll.edu.au/a-to-z-of-skin)

This factsheet was developed as part of the Koolungar Moorditj Healthy Skin Project.