



## MATTHEW A. BERNSTEIN, M.D.

ORTHOPEDIC HAND & UPPER EXTREMITY SURGEON

# Scar Care

### When to start scar care/massaging your scar(s):

- If you had sutures/staples removed and steri-strips applied:
  - Please wait until the day after your steri-strips fall off to start massaging your scar. (Tomorrow the earliest)
  - If the steri strips have not fallen off within 7 days of application, please remove the steri strips yourself.
- If you had sutures/staples removed but NO steri strips applied; wait until the day after suture/staple removal (tomorrow) to begin scar care.

### Tomorrow or later, you should begin massaging your scar:

- Hourly throughout the day - while you are awake.
  - Use any finger/digit from your opposite hand to massage your scar(s) for 20-30 seconds per scar.
  - Massage gently in line with the scar, at angles to the scar, in circles along and over the scar, and even perpendicular to the scar.
  - Continue the scar care regimen for 2 full years.
    - It takes that long for your scar(s) to fully mature: become mobile and maximally tolerant of sun exposure.

### What to use to massage your scar (assuming no allergies to the ingredients):

- Hand Lotion (containing a sunscreen) or Sunscreen
  - Ingredients should include:
    - sunscreen with an SPF of 8 or higher, and
    - Vitamin E and/or Aloe (if not allergic)
- Look at the ingredients as the manufacturers don't always list all of the ingredients on the front of the container.
- Examples:
  - Palmer's Cocoa Butter – Advanced Scar Serum (SPF, VitE, Aloe)
  - Gold Bond Protection (SPF, VitE)
  - Coppertone Tanning Lotion (SPF15, VitE, Aloe)
  - Coppertone Kids Tear Free Lotion (SPF50, Aloe)
  - Banana Boat Ultra Defense Lotion (SPF30/50, VitE, Aloe)
  - Mederma Scar Cream Plus (SPF, Cepalin)
  - Lubriderm Daily Moisture Lotion with SPF15 (SPF, moisturizer)

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