

When will my scar go away?

It takes a full year for the healing processes to be complete. Most of the significant changes are in the first 6 months. Your scar will go through several stages of healing before the redness fades and it settles down into a fine whitish line.

Can my wound open up?

During these 6 months your wound is fragile. Do not pull or tug on it, as it could break open. The skin will never return to full strength in the area of your scar. It will take it 6 months to return to 95% strength.

When will the area of my surgery feel normal again?

It takes 1-2 years for the nerves to “settle down”. During this time you may experience numbness, tingling or a crawling sensation. Some areas never gain full feeling back. This is unavoidable and normal.

How long should I continue wound care?

Once your wound is healed (all open areas are covered with skin), you may discontinue wound care.

When may I apply make-up or sunscreen?

You may apply make-up and/or sunscreen after the sutures or steri-strips are removed and the wound is completely healed. Once healed, good sun protection, including regular sunscreen use will be important.

Why does my scar feel lumpy?

You may feel bumps and lumps under the skin. This is normal and is due to the dissolvable sutures under the surface. They will go away with time. Occasionally a red bump or pustule forms along the suture line when a buried stitch works its way to the surface. This is only temporary, and applying a warm compress to the spot usually helps it resolve. If it does not resolve, or you have questions, please call us.

Why is my scar puffy?

Sometimes 1-3 months after surgery a scar will become “puffy”. These scars will often benefit from a small amount of dermabrasion, a sanding type procedure, to help them blend in. Generally this is performed in the 3-6 month time period. If this is something you desire, please do not hesitate to call us for an appointment. We will be happy to see you.

Should I massage my scar?

After one month you may gently begin massaging your scar for a few minutes 2-3 times a day.

Should I use vitamin E oil or other scar products?

Generally these products are not harmful, unless they irritate your skin or you become allergic to them. There are a number of creams and products that help to moisturize the wound, which may help improve the healing. Plain Vaseline works very well for this, is inexpensive, and non-allergenic.

Will I have another skin cancer?

You have demonstrated the ability to have a skin cancer. Your best defense is to see your dermatologist on a regular basis. Regular skin checks can detect skin cancers even before you notice them. Prevention is key, and good sun protection, including sunscreen is crucial.

The next six months is a time when healing is progressing, but slowly. Patience is the key, but if at any time you feel you need to be seen or just need reassurance, we are here to provide that. Please do not hesitate to call us at (703) 723-5700.