

Can Scarring Be Treated?

Scars can be undesirable for several reasons. Obviously, from a visual perspective, they can create a certain amount of self-consciousness, especially if they are in a very visible location, such as the face. They may also have some physical symptoms, such as itchiness or pain, so that leads us to the question: “**can plastic surgery remove scars?**” The answer is “**yes, but not entirely.**” Plastic surgery can reduce the size of a scar, however, it cannot totally remove it. This is because the process of removing a scar cannot return the skin to its original state. A scar, by definition, is permanent damage to the skin following an injury or surgery. However, procedures are constantly improving, so the degree to which can be made less noticeable are increasing year-to-year.

Plastic surgeons have a range of surgical and non-surgical methods to reduce scarring. These include:

- **Chemical Peels** – If your scar is not too deep, that is to say only affecting the upper layers of the skin, then this may be a suitable procedure. It works by causing the epidermis to peel off so, in effect, exfoliating the skin. Then new skin will grow back, ideally leaving the scar less noticeable than it previously was.
- **Dermabrasion** – Similar to chemical peels, filler injections, dermabrasion, and surgical scar revision. The most appropriate treatment option will depend on the specific circumstances and condition of the scar.
- **Filler Injections/Soft Tissue Filler** – This procedure is considered most appropriate for indented scars. In other words, scars which do not stick out, but instead are indented into the skin. Collagen or other suitable fillers are used to literally “fill the indentation,” subsequently raising it to the level of the rest of the skin, thus making it less noticeable. Steroids may be used for keloidal burn scars.
- **Surgical Scar Revision** – This is the process of surgically removing the scar and then rejoining the layers of skin. It cannot totally remove the scar, but can decrease the length or width of a scar.
- **Laser Energy** – Various types of lasers can provide treatment options both with subacute as well as the chronic sequelae of burns.
- **Regenerative Medicine** – This is a game-changing area of medicine with the potential to fully heal damaged tissues & organs, offering solutions and hope for people who have conditions that today are beyond repair.

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