

C-Section

Scar Mobilization



Educational Handout



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You should seek your own professional counsel for any medical condition or before starting or altering any exercise or fitness program.

Cesarean scar massage is a safe, simple, and inexpensive therapy you can try on yourself.

Indications

Cesarean scar massage may be helpful for people with painful scars or scars that feel tight or stuck compared to the surrounding skin.

Contraindications

First ask your healthcare provider if your scar is ready for massage. Your 6-weeks follow up appointment is the perfect time to ask. You should wait until the incision is fully closed. Scar massage should not cause any bleeding.

What the research says

Overall there is a lack of research on scar massage. There is evidence that scar massage works best on post-surgical scars. (Shin 2012) Limited evidence shows that massaging painful Cesarean scars reduces pain and helps the scar move better, even for Cesarean scars that have been painful for many years. (Wasserman 2018, Wasserman 2016)

Instructions

There are many ways to do Cesarean scar massage. The most important thing is that you massage your scar in all directions and that you work within your tolerance. It is normal for scar massage to hurt, but if these methods feel extremely painful try using indirect pressure, less pressure or making smaller movements. Your tolerance may gradually increase over time as you practice.

3 Simple Methods

Method 1: Drawing small circles



Place your fingertips at one edge of your scar. Draw several small circles in one direction, and then the other direction. Move your fingertips over slightly and again draw several small circles in both directions. Repeat across the full length of your scar.

Notice if your scar moves easier in some places and feels stuck in other places. Spend extra time on the places that feel stuck.

If your scar is very tender to touch, try drawing circles an inch away from your scar. Start at one edge and move parallel across the full length of your scar. Repeat on the other side.

Method 2: Pull in different directions



Place your fingertips at one edge of your scar.

Pull your scar up towards your head and then down towards your feet.

Now pull the scar right and then left.

Repeat this across the full length of your scar, pulling each part in all four directions.

Notice if your scar moves easier in some directions and feels stuck in other directions.

Try holding your scar towards the direction it feels stuck and take several deep breaths.

If your scar is very tender to touch, you can also try this method an inch away from your scar on both sides.

3 Simple Methods

Method 3: Pinch and roll



Start at one edge of your scar. Place your thumbs above and your fingertips below your scar. Try to gently pinch your scar up. Gently roll your scar between your fingers and thumbs. Repeat this across the full length of your scar.

Try massaging your scar 5-10 minutes a day or until it moves easily like the surrounding skin.

1. Shin TM, Bordeaux JS. The role of massage in scar management: a literature review. *Dermatol Surg.* 2012;38(3):414-423.
2. Wasserman JB, Abraham K, Massery M, Chu J, Farrow A, Marcoux BC. Soft tissue mobilization techniques are effective in treating chronic pain following Cesarean section: A multicenter randomized clinical trial. *JWHPT.* 2018;42(3):109.
3. Wasserman JB, Steele-Thornborrow JL, Yuen JS, Halkiotis M, Riggins EM. Chronic caesarian section scar pain treated with fascial scar release techniques: A case series. *J Bodyw Mov Ther.* 2016;20(4):906-913.

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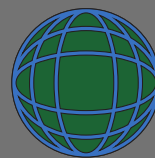
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