Key Elements of Scar Assessment

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Disclosures

• None
The Scar

• Inherent to surgery

• One of the single most important determinants of successful surgery
  • Patients and surgeons
  • Judge surgical outcome
Assessing a scar – The Art!

• Objective Components
  • Physical
  • Structural
  • Mechanical characteristics
  • Physical limitations

• Subjective Components
  • Patients evaluation
  • Psychological component
# Vancouver Scar Scale

**Table 1 – The Vancouver Scar Scale.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pigmentation (0–2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypopigmentation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyperpigmentation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vascularity (0–3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purple</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pliability (0–5)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supple</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yielding</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banding</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracture</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (0–3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal (flat)</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0–2 mm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–5 mm</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt;5 mm</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessing a Scar – Objective Components

- Location
  - Cosmetically sensitive
- Extent
  - Size, physical, and structural characteristics
- Timing
  - Maturity of the scar
Location

• Very visible location
• May be very concerning
  • Even if not visible
  • Cosmetically sensitive location
Location

• Distortion
  • Other anatomical structures
Location
Extent

• Even small scars
  • Can have big impact!
Extent – Physical characteristics
Extent – Physical characteristics
Extent – Mechanical characteristics
Extent – Mechanical characteristics
Timing

• Time can be the best medicine!!
• Let the scar mature
Pre op
Defect
Closure
1 week post op
4 months post op
10 months post op
10 months post op side views
Assessing a Scar – Subjective Components

• Patient perception
  • Extremely important
  • Often overlooked!

• Psychological component
  • Arguably the most important part
  • How much time spent on this?
Patient Impact
Patient Impact
Patient Impact
Summary – Assessing the Scar

- Objective
  - Extent – Size, physical, mechanical

- Physical limitations

- Subjective
  - Patient’s evaluation
  - Psychological impact