

Optimal Incision and Suture Methods Make Scars Less Visible
- Importance of Conveying These Concepts to General Surgeons -

Rei Ogawa, Satoshi Akaishi, Mamiko Tosa, Teruyuki Dohi, Masayo Aoki

Department of Plastic, Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery, Nippon Medical School,
Tokyo, Japan

In general surgery, it is important to ensure that wound healing proceeds smoothly, because this prevents complications such as surgical site infection (SSI) and hypertrophic scar and keloid development. Proper wound healing is achieved by orienting the incision line appropriately, employing the correct suture depth, applying suture methods that do not cause ischemia, and administering postoperative wound management. Specifically, if the direction of the incision line matches the direction in which the skin is pulled in daily body movements, the entire scar will be placed under strain. This will delay scar maturation and promote the persistence of inflammation. This greatly increases the risk of hypertrophic scar and keloid development. Moreover, suturing should not involve tugging on the skin to close the wound: rather, the subcutaneous and soft tissue should be firmly sutured with an absorbable thread such that the wound edges contact each other naturally before the dermal suturing is performed. It is essential that general surgeons are aware that wounds should not be closed with dermal sutures alone. Finally, after the sutures are removed, the wound should be stabilized by fixation with surgical or silicone tape. Starting 1 month after surgery, steroid tape/plaster application should be started immediately if there are signs that hypertrophic scars or keloids are forming. This long-term follow-up plays a key role in making the scar less visible.