

## How well can post-surgical scars be cured?

-Current status and future prospects-

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Patients are referred to plastic surgery departments for a variety of complaints after surgery. Some develop hypertrophic scars and keloids and are concerned about the pain and itching of these lesions. Others have normal mature scars but hope to improve their size and color. The former patients can be treated by conservative or surgical approaches with sufficiently long follow-up. The latter patients can be treated by surgically removing noticeable scars, closing the wound with appropriate sutures, and then starting scar care with methods such as tape fixation immediately after thread removal. The aim is to generate the smallest possible linear mature scar. This is because in modern medicine at present, scars cannot be completely erased: consequently, the best plastic surgeons can do is to ensure that post-surgical scars are as narrow as possible and that surgical incisions yield linear mature scars that travel along the direction of the skin crease. To realize this aim, it is important not only to apply effective treatments after postsurgical scars have become noticeable but also to ensure that noticeable scars are prevented from forming in the first place by applying appropriate scar care and treatment in the early postoperative period. With this objective in mind, we established a special outpatient clinic for postoperative scarring 10 years ago. The incidence of abnormal scarring in the clinic was suppressed by starting scar care and treatment early in the post-surgical period. This effect suggests this approach is useful. In the future, we intend to widely disseminate this message to the surgical community, namely, that it is important to administer early postoperative scar care and treatment.