

Carolina Skin Surgery Center Monthly Newsletter

July

7/1/2015

Edition 17

What's New with Your Scar?

By: Tara Haltom, Medical Assistant

As you may have already read in previous newsletters we are always trying to improve the practice and expand upon what we can do for our patients. In our February 2015 newsletter, Dr. Carruth defined what a scar is. The intention of this article was to relieve some anxieties and to give you a better understanding on how to care for your scar. We are currently testing some products that may help patients with troublesome scars. These troublesome scars are called Keloid and Hypertrophic scars.

A keloid scar is an irregularly shaped, firm, and progressively enlarging scar caused by excessive tissue repair due to trauma or incision that extends beyond the original wound margins. This type of scar can have some associated itching and/or other nerve sensations that can be painful. Hypertrophic scars are also elevated and can resemble a keloid but it does not spread into surrounding tissues, is rarely painful and can be itchy.

There are several common treatments for scars as previously described by Dr. Carruth in the February newsletter. The most proven (as well as the most cost effective) treatment is simple scar massage. There are also Kenalog injections, which, is a diluted steroid that is injected into the scar. There are also different types of lasers that can be used and are effective, but lasers can be costly and are most likely not covered by your insurance. You can also have the keloid or hypertrophic scar removed (cut out) but there is a high probability that it will come back.

Silicone Scar Pads are products that we have recommended before but now we hope to offer them to our patients in the near future. How does it work? The silicone acts to hydrate scar tissue, which in turn softens the scar, reducing its development and causing the scar to fade (the scar will never completely go away). When should you begin to use this? For new scars you may begin using silicone scar pads as soon as the skin is healed and there is no oozing or crusting at the site. For existing scars you may begin using the pads right away. How long should you use the pads? Each pad should be worn as many hours a day as you can tolerate. You may remove them to shower. Average treatment time for maximum results is 8-12 weeks.

We are making sure this is a good product for you by testing it on ourselves first! We have tested two different products. We all picked different locations on our bodies and wore the product for one week. We were testing how tolerable the product was (was it itchy, did it irritate our skin or cause any other reactions). We also tested its durability (how long did it stay on). We first tested a silicone tape that had some mixed reviews. Half of our test group had some irritation associated with it and everyone agreed it

was not very durable. We tested a different silicon pad and all agreed it was more tolerable with no irritation and it was more durable.

The next step for us is to test the product on a Hypertrophic or Keloid scar on a patient. We are so excited to see this product in action! This may take a while because, as mentioned before, the average treatment is 8 to 12 weeks. Once this step is complete and we are satisfied with the results we hope to offer this product to all of our patients! If not, it'll be back to the drawing board! We will keep you updated with our progress.

Announcements for July:

- Happy July 4th everyone! Our office is closed on Friday, July 3rd.
 - If you have an emergency and need to reach the Provider on call then just call the main number (704-295-0000), press 1, and follow the instructions.

Check out our most recent blogs on our website:

- The link is : carolinaskinsurgery.com/blog
- Dr. Carruth has posted blogs with information about sunscreen.
- Previous newsletters are available also

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What is Mohs Micrographic Surgery?



Mohs (rhymes with toes) Micrographic Surgery is an advanced treatment procedure for skin cancer which offers the highest potential for recovery – even if the skin cancer has been previously treated. This procedure is a state-of-the-art skin cancer treatment in which the physician serves as surgeon, pathologist, and reconstructive surgeon. The procedure was developed by Frederic Mohs, M.D. in the 1930's and has undergone several modifications throughout the years. It relies on the precision and accuracy of a microscope to trace and ensure removal of skin cancer down to its roots. The goal of the procedure is to remove the skin cancer totally while minimizing the amount of normal noncancerous skin removed in the process. The highly trained surgeons that perform Mohs Micrographic Surgery are specialists in both Dermatology and Skin Pathology. Properly trained Mohs surgeons have completed an internship and residency in Dermatology following medical school, plus a fellowship program approved by the American College of Mohs Surgery that includes extensive training in Pathology and reconstructive surgery for at least five years of specialized training beyond medical school.

CAROLINA SKIN SURGERY CENTER

"Specializing in the treatment of skin cancer"

About Dr. Carruth:

Dr. Marc R. Carruth is the Director of Carolina Skin Surgery Center. Dr. Carruth received his M.D. degree from Duke University where he graduated with highest honors in 1993 and was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. He was awarded a Howard Hughes Medical Institute fellowship at the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Carruth completed his internship in Internal Medicine at Harvard, Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, Massachusetts and a Dermatology residency at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia where he was chief resident. Dr. Carruth completed his Mohs Micrographic and Dermatologic Surgery fellowship at Baptist Hospital in Kansas City, MO.

Dr. Carruth is known for his personable bedside manner and has been providing excellent care to patients in the Charlotte region since 1997. He has performed thousands of Mohs micrographic procedures during his tenure.

About Lisa Matuga, PA-C:

Lisa has been a Physician Assistant for over 6 years and has been providing excellent dermatologic care in the Charlotte area for over three years.

Lisa received her Master of Science in Medicine and graduated from the Physician Assistant Program at Western Michigan University in 2008. She has a passion for helping patients with their dermatological needs and we are very excited to have her as a part of our team.

Meet the Staff:

Receptionist: Sandy - She always has a smile on her face and is willing to help with anything. Sandy has been with Dr. Carruth since April of 2010.

Billing: Cathy – Understanding health insurance can be overwhelming, but Cathy is always willing to call and verify benefits and then explain them to you as simply as possible. Cathy has been with Dr. Carruth since December of 2008.

Surgery Coordinator / Certified Clinical Medical Assistant: Ashley – She assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa Matuga, PA-C with procedures and also handles the surgery scheduling. If you have had Mohs surgery then you have probably spoken with her! Ashley has been with Dr. Carruth since May of 2011.

Lab Technician / Medical Assistant: Tara – She is the one who processes the tissue for Dr. Carruth to review under the microscope (Mohs surgery). She also assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa with procedures. She has been with Dr. Carruth since September of 2007.

Registered Medical Assistant / Lab Technician: Jackie – She assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa with procedures and also helps process the tissue in the lab. Jackie has been with Dr. Carruth since October of 2008.

Certified Surgical Technician: Cynthia – She assists Dr. Carruth and Lisa with procedures and has been with Dr. Carruth since September of 2009.

Certified Clinical Medical Assistant / Surgery Coordinator: Chiffon – assists Lisa Matuga, PA-C with patients and handles surgery scheduling. She has been a part of our team since 2014.

Office Manager: April has been with Dr. Carruth since August of 2006. Please let her know if you have any suggestions or comments – we encourage feedback and are always willing to learn.

CAROLINA SKIN SURGERY CENTER

2615 E. 7TH ST.

CHARLOTTE, NC 28204

Phone: 704-295-0000

Fax: 704-295-0005

www.carolinaskinsurgery.com