



**SCAR** massage is a common method used to help remodel scar tissue that has developed in injured tissue. Adhesions and Scar tissue form after an injury to the normal collagen cells in the body. The tissues can become very restricted as the elasticity of the tissues is less than the body's natural muscular tissues. Break down of scar tissue through massage help to decrease pain, increase range of movement and relieve restriction. Scar massage is also known as scar mobilization.

### **How does Scar tissue form?**

There is collagen in muscles, tendons, and ligaments. There is also collagen in skin and bones. The cellular makeup of collagen makes it very strong due to the alignment of collagen cells. It can resist tensile forces, such as stretching and pulling, without tearing or breaking.

After an injury to a muscle, tendon, skin, or ligaments in the body, the inflammatory process starts to heal the injury site. This process helps to ensure that the injured site is cleaned up and new cells are brought to the site that will soon become healthy tissue. Some of these new cells are collagen cells. Unfortunately, the body does not know exactly how to arrange the collagen cells so that they become healthy tissue that can resist tensile and stretching forces.

The collagen cells become a balled-up clump of tissue called scar tissue. This tissue lacks the normal stretchiness of healthy, uninjured tissue.

Scar tissue is not a permanent fixture in the body. After it forms and healing has taken place, the scar needs to be remodelled so that it can tolerate the stress and forces that the body may encounter. The remodelling process is essential to ensure that normal range of motion, strength, and mobility are restored.

## Remodelling Scar Tissue

The most appropriate types of massage used to help in remodeling scar tissue include sports massage, deep tissue massage and remedial massage.

Sports massage is used to break down scar tissue. A sports massage mainly focuses on areas containing soft tissues. Sports massage can vary in pressure depending on personal preference. The breakdown of scar tissue occurs during a sports massage as an increase in temperature of the scar tissue is encouraged. An increase in temperature helps the scar tissue to loosen and be broken down more easily. A variety of techniques are used within a sports massage aiming to breakdown scar tissue, decrease pain and increase relaxation.

Scar tissue is broken down during a deep tissue massage. A deep, firm pressure is used aiming to get deeper within muscle fibers and tissues. A deep tissue massage breaks down adhesions and collagen fibers that can be caused as a result of scar tissue. Adhesions restrict movement and increase pain resulting in an increase in stress. Breaking down scar tissue through deep tissue massage relieves restriction to decrease pain and reduce stress.

*\*In general, your scar should be completely closed and healed before massage. Using massage therapy to encourage a more rapid healing process for existing injuries can be a powerful approach to recovery. However, it's also important to discuss with the therapist about your medical history, medications and accidents or injuries to meet your needs.*

### **Between treatments, there are a number of things you can do:**

- Warm up the area with hot water bottle – heat helps to loosen the fibres
- Wrap a compress soaked with castor oil and keep on the affected area for 60-90 minutes – this will help to break up scars and adhesions

