

Hand therapy department

How to help sensitive scars

Information for patients, relatives and carers

Introduction

Scar tissue and swelling after an injury or surgery can interfere with sensory nerve fibres. This can cause discomfort around the scar area.

To reduce the discomfort, you can stimulate the sensitive nerve endings using these three techniques

Textures

1. Choose between three and five different textures. Some should feel OK to touch and some just a bit uncomfortable to touch. Examples include cotton wool and a rough flannel.
2. Move each of these textured surfaces across the length of your sensitive scar/area.
3. Start with the most comfortable texture, for one minute. Then try a slightly more uncomfortable texture for another minute. Then keep going with the other surfaces.
4. It is normal to feel discomfort when doing this. So, try to focus on the feeling of the touch rather than the discomfort.
5. Do this for _____ minutes, _____ a day.

Immersion

1. Fill three containers with loose objects of different sizes. These could be rice, lentils, beans, pasta and cotton balls for example.
2. Put your whole hand/wrist into each container. Gently rub and move your way through the contents.
3. Once this feels comfortable (or after two minutes) move onto the second container. Work your hand/wrist through its contents. Once this feels comfortable, do the same with the third container.
4. Do this for _____ minutes, _____ a day.

Tapping

1. Use your opposite hand to gently tap along the full length of the scar/sensitive area.
2. As it becomes more comfortable, you can increase the pressure of your tapping. You can also begin using other non-sharp objects, such as a pen or ruler.
3. Do this for _____ minutes, _____ a day.

Useful contact details

To reschedule an appointment:

- 1) Phone: 020 3311 0333
Option 1: If your appointment is on the same day.
Option 2: If your appointment is another date in the future.
- 2) Email: appointments@imperial.nhs.uk

To contact a therapist: imperial.handtherapyimperial@nhs.net.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street
London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: www.imperial.nhs.uk

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Published: January 2024
Review date: January 2028
Reference no: 817
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