



Looking after your scars following breast and abdominal surgery



Tape
Moisturise
Protect



Following breast reduction, breast lift and abdominoplasty, the surgical wounds are closed in 2-3 layers using dissolvable stitches



After that, the wounds are sealed with tissue glue and surgical tape (steri-strips), and covered by splash proof dressings



Appearance immediately after a full tummy tuck
Protective light splash proof dressings are applied
No compression garments



Appearance immediately after the completion
of breast reduction/lift
Protective light splash proof dressings are applied



The outer dressings are removed when you return for your first review at around 7 days

The steri-strips may be left for another week

The steri-strips can be removed 2 weeks after breast reduction/uplift surgery
Prior application of vaseline to the tape helps it peel off with ease



Two weeks: Following removal of the steri-strips and washing of the scars in a shower



The fully healed wounds are retaped using 3M Micropore tape





Appearance of the surgical tape two weeks after tummy tuck
The scar 18 months later



Abdominoplasty patients:

You **do not** need to tape the belly button
Regular daily massage with moisturising
cream is sufficient



Instructions from 2 weeks after surgery



Remember: Fresh scars are made of delicate skin that takes months to recover its function

It needs regular moisturising and protection from irritants



Start using Micropore 3M tape once the steri-strips have been removed

You can keep the tape on in the shower

Skin tone alternatives to the white tape



3M Micropore Skin Tone Surgical Tape



Keep the tape on for 3-5 days (you can still shower with it on)

Remove after 3-5 days in the shower and massage the scars with moisturising cream

Re-apply the tape **12-24 hours** later

Repeat this cycle for the next 4 months



We recommend simple, fragrance-free moisturising creams

Massage the product around the scars with a gentle, circular motion until it absorbs and is no longer greasy to the touch



There is little evidence to support the use of creams containing Vitamin E

Massaging a moisturiser like E45 into the scar will stop it becoming dry and help make it supple



Examples

CeraVe Moisturizing Cream
Aveeno Cream
E45 Cream



Don't use the cream if your scars
are cracked or bleeding

If you experience a burning sensation,
itching, or notice the formation of pus-filled
spots, try another cream



Protect your scars from irritants:

The sun
Chlorine

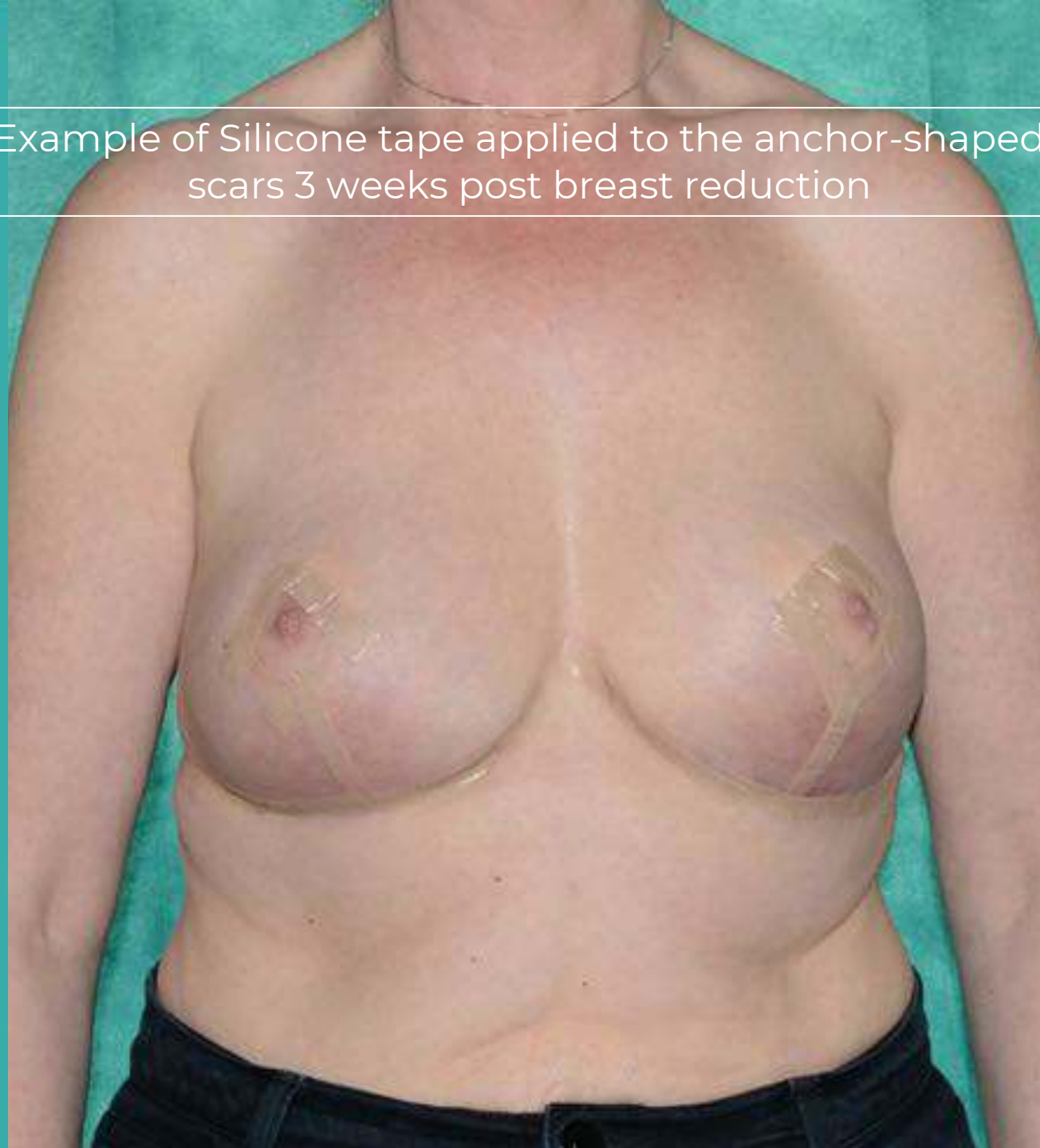
Underwired or tight, ill-fitting bra

Silicone tape: an alternative to the 3M tape

Silicone sheets, cut into narrow strips of variable length can be used. **They are expensive with no clear advantage over the 3 M tape**



Example of Silicone tape applied to the anchor-shaped scars 3 weeks post breast reduction





What do we advise when the wounds are not fully healed?

It is not uncommon that parts of the wound are slow to heal or breakdown after initial healing

Slow healing at
the T-junction

Such areas need to
be covered by non
adherent protective
dressings and may
take weeks to heal

Taping and/or
moisturizing of the
rest of the scars may
continue



After initial healing, a small blister or boil-like lump appears resulting in a minor breakdown of the wound
The most common cause of this is a reaction to one of the internal dissolvable stitches
Inform the specialist nurse

Reaction to a
buried stitch

This may be
reported to the
specialist nurse

It can be covered
by non adherent
protective
dressings till it heals

Taping and/or
moisturizing of the
rest of the scars
may continue





Healthy scars at three weeks

Appearance of breasts 6 weeks after reduction surgery





Before breast lift



Two weeks after



12 months after

Scars take time to fade



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