

# Hand Therapy

## Desensitisation

Scars can become over-sensitive or hypersensitive to touch. If you avoid touching a scar it normally makes this worse. Instead, gradually re-introduce touch to the area. This will reduce unpleasant sensations. Try to use/include your fingers/hand normally in daily activities, not leaving the affected part out. If your symptoms are unbearable or worsen please stop and discuss with your therapist. Try to repeat the suggestions below 1-2 hourly throughout the day or as frequently as you are able.

### Massage

Massage the affected area with non-perfumed moisturising cream (not vitamin E or aqueous cream). Try circular movements over the scar as well as working from one side of the scar across to the other. Gradually, increase the pressure from soft to firm and increase the length of time to a few minutes.

### Texture touching

Find an item, e.g. cotton wool, that you can tolerate when touched against your scar even if it feels unpleasant. Rub (or place) the texture over the area. Do this for a few minutes until you become used to the sensation. Repeat this process throughout the day.

If the area is too sensitive to rub, try placing the material on and off the scar until you can tolerate rubbing. Start gently then gradually increase the pressure or intensity.

When your scar is no longer sensitive to this texture, move on to a new material. Work your way from the least to the most irritating texture e.g. cotton wool → jersey material → dry towel → plastic/wood.

(You could also fill containers with different particles and immerse your hand/scar in them in order to get used to the sensation. Gradually build up the intensity e.g. cotton wool → lentils → dry pasta.)

### Tapping

Gently tap the affected part of your hand with your other hand. Gradually build up the intensity of the taps.

### Vibration

Apply a commercially available massager or an electric toothbrush over the affected area at different pressures and/or frequencies.

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