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Massage + Scarring

Some Recent Research: Massage to Reduce Burn Scars

A 2014 study published in Burns indicated that burn rehabilitation massage therapy is effective in improving pain, itching and scar characteristics in hypertrophic scars after a burn.
**Study methods:** In a study published in the journal *Burns*, 146 burn patients with scars were randomly divided into two groups, either experimental or control. Before and after treatment, researchers assessed the scar characteristics for thickness, melanin, erythema, transepidermal water loss (TEWL), sebum and elasticity. Additionally, scars were measured on the visual analog scale (VAS) and the itching scale.

**Protocol:** All patients received standard rehabilitation therapy for hypertrophic scars (raised scars that are typically red, thick, and may be itchy or painful), and 76 patients received additional burn scar rehabilitation massage therapy.

**Results:** The scores in both the VAS and itching scale decreased significantly in both groups. However, the massage group showed a significant decrease in scar thickness, melanin, erythema, and TEWL. There was a significant intergroup difference in skin elasticity, with the massage group showing substantial improvement.

**References**


**Massage + Relaxation**

**Some Recent Research: Aromatherapy Massage to Enhance Relaxation in Children with Burns**

A 2012 article also in *Burns* suggests that aromatherapy massage is effective in inducing relaxation in pediatric burn patients.

**Study Methods and Protocol:** 71 pediatric burn patients with a median age of three underwent a total of 126 massage sessions. Heart rates and respiratory rates were measured before and after the sessions. Behavioral responses like sleeping, facial expressions and body posture were recorded as secondary outcomes.

**Results:** Mean heart rates decreased significantly from 118 to 109, and respiratory rates decreased from 34 to 30, indicating increased relaxation. Additionally, 92.8 percent of massage sessions elicited positive behavioral responses, such as sleeping, calmness or a desire to have the massage therapy continue. Based on the results of the study, aromatherapy massage appears to be an effective approach to reducing the distress levels of pediatric burn patients.

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