

## Advice on the Use of Silicone Gel Sheeting

### What is silicone gel sheeting?

Silicone gel sheeting is a waterproof dressing which can be used to help manage scars.

### When would I need to use silicone gel?

When a scar is making movement difficult, or if the scar is itchy, sore or uncomfortable.

### What does silicone gel do to the scar?

By trapping moisture into the scar, the gel helps to keep the scar supple and soft. It has also been shown to help the scar to mature, that is, to reach a stage where it stops growing and is smooth and supple, more like the surrounding skin.

### So will the scar disappear?

No, the scar will always be visible to some extent. Also, scar tissue may feel different from surrounding skin - it tends to be drier and less elastic.

### How is silicone gel used?

It is worn like a dressing, tacky side against the skin.

It may be held in place with dressings tape such as Micropore, with a stretch covering such as Tubigrip, or inside a splint.

Unlike a dressing, it is re-used until it wears out.

### Do I need to take any special care when using silicone gel?

Yes! Before putting the gel on make sure the skin is clean. Wash the area with a plain soap - nothing with added moisturiser or a strong scent. Rinse and dry the area well. After removing the gel, wash the gel as if it were your skin and dry it carefully with a non-fluffy towel, a hairdryer on a cool setting or let it air dry. Then replace the backing sheet to keep it dust free, ready to use again.

### How long should I wear the gel for each day?

To begin with, try the gel for an hour. When you remove it check your skin for any sign of a reaction. If you notice any soreness, or any sign of a rash, do not use again until you have spoken to the member of staff who gave you the gel.

If your skin is fine, try wearing the gel for longer the next day, gradually building up the length of time until you are wearing it for most of the 24 hour period.

Sometimes it will only be practical to wear the gel overnight. If so, try to wear it for a trial period in the evening before using it for a full night. The therapist will explain how long you should be using the gel for.

## When should I avoid using silicone gel?

The gel should be removed if the skin is broken, irritated or there is a rash present. It can be used again once the skin has healed.

If you have any concerns regarding the use of silicone gel. Please contact the Hand Therapy team on **01392 402429**.

Therapist

## Special instructions - notes

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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