

**C-section Recovery**

C-section scar can have a poor sensation/ numbness/ ongoing pain and a feeling of tightness in the area are unfortunately are common.

It rarely gets talked about… There has been trauma to muscles, nerves and blood vessels. Your core muscles and a number of organs are potentially affected by this. Massage can make a huge difference to the healing process.

**The Importance of Massaging your C-section Scar**

You will want to begin massaging your scar once it is healed and the doctor gives you the ok, which is usually at your check up. If you are experiencing any pain before your appointment, then you can gently massage around the scar area but not over the scar. Loosening up the surrounding tissues can help release the tightness and pain. Remember it is never too late to work on your c-section scar.

The scar is far deeper than we can see. Scar tissue formed as part of the healing process, the fibres go in all different directions. These can feel tighter and can adhere to other tissues, such as skin, muscles and other organs.

What can adhesions lead to?

* Low back and pelvic pain- adhesions can effect area with movement and core function
* Frequent urination- adhesions can effect bladder expansion and sensitivity
* Tight quads- scar tissue can pull
* Discomfort/pulling when exercising

**Why Should You Massage Your Surgical Scar?**

When scar tissue forms it creates layer of fibres that form in all different directions. These fibres can adhere to fascia and organs which can caused tightness and discomfort. Adhesions are bands of scar tissue that bind together body parts that are normally unconnected. Any tissue it may come in contact with may stick to it, this is way it is important to massage it to release it.

If you don’t massage your scar, a common issue is pelvic and lower back pain. The scar tissue can attached to the Sacrum (the triangle bone above the tail bone), which can cause restrictions and tilting/ rotation of the pelvis. The Sacrum needs full mobility to move the body freely and easily.

As soon as the scar is no longer open and considered well healed you can begin gentle massaging. Initially you will want to take a mild approach when

massaging. The scar may be really tender, red and painful. In this stage it may be best to work around the scar, focusing on the tissues immediately above and below it. As the scar becomes less sensitive you can follow this procedure with your fingers on top of the scar.

**The first layer is the superficial skin.** You lightly put your fingers on the skin and see how mobile the skin is in moving up and down and side to side. Think about placing your fingers on a keyboard and you’re checking to see if all the keys move equally in all directions. You may feel it moves down more than it does up so you will want to work more in the upward direction to regain movement in that area. Does it move easier to one side than the other? If so, work more in the direction of resistance, taking the skin till you feel a gentle stretching in the tissue. Hold it there until you feel a release or the tissues melting. Start by working the tissues around the scar and, in time, progress to doing it on top of the scar as your pain and tenderness allows. Eventually you will want to be able to roll the scar between your fingertips.

**There is also a second and third layer which involves more pressure!**

**Feel free to work the entire lower abdomen.**

Adhesions can form way over on the colon located near your hipbones. Gently take the tissues to where they don’t want to go and carefully hold them there.

You may feel a slight burning sensation, which is normal for stretching tissues. Hold the tissue at their end range of motion until you feel a softening or melting of the tissues. That is scar tissue releasing. It feels like butter melting under your fingertips.

If you work respectfully with your tissues, not forcing but encouraging the tissue to have more freedom of movement, you can attain that release or melting feeling. Avoid forcing, as the tissue may fight back and never release.

**How Long Do I Need to Continue Scar Massaging?**

Initially, massage regularly until your tissues are freely moving in all directions within all three layers. Once you’ve achieved that mobility you will want to check in with the area every so often, whether it’s every other week to once a month for the first year or two after your surgery. If you find the tissues getting tight again return to a more regular massaging routine.

Whether your c-section scar is new, several months, or years old, performing this massage can help you avoid problems down the road. It’s never too late! It may sound like a lot of work but spending just five minutes a day can do great things in releasing scar tissue and increasing mobility in your lower abdomen. If you have difficulties doing this or notice your tissues don’t seem to be responding to your efforts, then you should seek out a Women’s Health physical therapist for treatment.

Great video links for c-sections

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-VfUJ6JcWo&feature=youtu.be>

A live webinar from MamaActive on c-section recovery

<https://www.facebook.com/mamaactive1/videos/672780976248531/>