A New Fix For Scars

BY LAURIE DE LUCA, M.D.

If you’re like most, you have a few battle scars: lifelong reminders of that time you crashed into a wall trying a wheelie, emergency appendectomy, Olympic dream-killer knee surgery and let’s not forget the time you were showing off your knife skills during a dinner party. Not nearly as exciting are the acne cysts, pockmarks, skin discoloration and sun-damage you’ve accrued over the years, as well.

Though time may heal all wounds, the scars that remain can be itchy, painful and downright ugly. Pharmacy aisles burst with “clinically proven, doctor-recommended” treatments, and there are a thousand wives’ tales “guaranteed” to erase old scars or prevent new ones from forming. But if it were that easy, wouldn’t we have figured out how to prevent scars all together?

Here’s the deal: Our skin is a tough, but supple three-layer membrane: the epidermis, the dermis and the hypodermis. When injured, skin repairs itself by increasing the production of collagen—a protein vital to the skin’s strength and ability to repair. Normal production of collagen is what keeps our skin alive, youthful and glowing. However, in reaction to an injury, collagen production goes into overdrive, creating an abundance of fibrous collagen growth that will knit together “broken” skin patches like cuts and abrasions. Think of it like scaffolding that lets builders repair a wall. With the exception of very minor lesions, like paper cuts, every wound results in some degree of scarring. Once scar tissue develops and enough time has passed, a scar usually fades a good deal on its own. For those that remain — dented, raised, flat, red or bulky — here are a few options:

**Fraxel Laser.** Nonablative lasers, like Fraxel, are approved by the FDA to treat acne and surgery-related scars. It works by using microscopic laser light to target specific areas below the skin’s surface, stimulating a natural healing process below the skin, jump-starting collagen production and allowing new skin to emerge. You’ll get dramatic results with little to no downtime, and repeated will significantly lessen the appearance of scars on the face or body.

**Peels.** Not quite ready for a laser? Consider Vi Peel. Gentle, yet powerful, the Vi Peel combines the power of chemical peel and the nourishment from many vitamins to combat the most troublesome skin conditions, including acne and injury scars, fine lines, wrinkles, sun-damage and hyperpigmentation, even melasma. It will also shrink enlarged pores and promote collagen and elastin production of the skin, resulting in tighter, more supple skin. The results are quick and impressive, with significant improvement visible after one treatment.

The Vi Peel is suitable for any and all skin types and color. This extraordinary skin peel has shown excellent results on African-American patients, on patients of Asian or Latin descent, and those with darker olive skin. At last, patients of all ethnicities can enjoy the benefits of a chemical peel.

**Scar Gels.** Whether your concern is an old scar or fear that a new one will heal badly, Trinity Medical Pharmacy’s Custom Scar Rx Gel addresses the size, color, texture and itching that may come with what’s left of a wound. First, it takes the long-utilized medical use of silicone gel sheets and puts it into an easy-to-use formula that’s safe for all skin types. Then, Trinity Medical Pharmacy infuses the gel with a steroid, antihistamine and topical anesthetic plus Pracaxi oil (Pracasil-Plus), an organic compound rich with antioxidant, antibacterial and antifungal properties known to treat skin spots, severe acne, scars, psoriasis, and rosacea.

Especially ideal for preventing abnormal scars like hypertrophic and keloid, Trinity Medical Pharmacy’s Custom Scar Rx Gel creates a breathable layer of softening hydration and protection, working to correct an imbalance of growth factors that leads to irregularities like hypertrophic and keloid scars. Both types rise above the skin and can cause pain, itching, burning, and contractures. Most commonly found at sites of burns, cuts, and body piercings, they can significantly affect one’s quality of life, both physically and psychologically. Trinity Medical Pharmacy’s innovative treatment is remarkably easy to apply, affordable, and effective.

Call 813.874.2332 for an appointment or visit www.LecadaTampa.com. Lecada Medical Artistry is conveniently located at 3710 West Azeele St., Tampa, 33609