



Silicone gel sheeting

This leaflet provides you with information about silicone gel sheeting and advice on how to use it. If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact your therapist.

What is silicone gel sheeting?

It is a soft and flexible dressing that contains medical grade silicone gel. It is applied over scars as a safe and effective treatment to flatten, soften, and fade problematic scars. It can be used in all age groups for new and old scars.

What is it used for?

Silicone products may improve the look and feel of your scar but they will not make the scar disappear altogether. Silicone gel sheeting has been shown to improve the colour, texture and thickness of scar tissue. It can also help to reduce itching, discomfort and irritation.

How does it work?

Research has shown that it keeps the scar moist, which causes it to soften and become suppler (flexible). Silicone itself is not an active agent but is very effective at providing a sealed environment to trap moisture. It should be used in addition to moisturising and massaging your scar, which you must continue to do as advised by your therapist. You may not notice any improvement straight away but, if you use it regularly, you should see progress after several weeks.

Where can I get silicone gel sheeting?

There are different brands of silicone gel sheeting available. Your therapist will assess your scar and write a letter to ask your GP to provide you with a prescription. It is also possible for you to purchase silicone gel sheeting yourself by ordering it online.

How should I apply my silicone gel sheeting?

Do not use the gel sheeting on open wounds, scabs or stitches (sutures). Apply as following:

- Clean the affected area.
- Open the pack and remove the sheeting.
- Only cut enough gel sheeting to cover the scar area. The piece that you use should be slightly bigger than the scar itself.
- The remaining sheeting should be stored in its packet at room temperature. Do not fold the sheeting as this will shorten its lifespan.
- Remove the protective backing.

- Apply the sticky/gel side to the affected area without stretching the sheeting.
- Keep the protective backing safe for later use.

The sheeting is normally self-adhesive but may require further fixation with a bandage or tape.

How long should I wear it for?

When you first wear the sheeting, you need to build up a tolerance to wearing it.

- Wear it for 1 hour on the first day, then 2 hours on the second day etc.
- Gradually increase by an hour a day, or more, until you are up to 7 hours a day.
- Increase the wearing hours, as you see fit, to at least 12 hours and up to 23 hours a day.

The recommended initial treatment period is 3 months. However, you may be advised to continue to use it for longer than this by your therapist, depending on the appearance and status of the scar. The use of silicone will need to be reviewed regularly to check the effectiveness of the treatment.

Ongoing use and care

You should clean both the sheeting and the affected area every day. A build-up of dirt or bacteria may irritate the scar. In warm weather, you may sweat more and your skin and gel sheeting may need to be washed more often. These products are expensive so it is important to care for them as detailed below:

- Remove the sheet at least once a day to wash the area, moisturise and check your skin.
- Place the sheet in a bowl of lukewarm water and gently clean with a mild, non-perfumed soap.
- Pat dry with a clean towel.
- The sheeting can be then re-applied.

If you are not wearing the silicone sheet, re-apply the protective backing to prevent it from drying out. Keep gel sheets in a clean, plastic sealed tub when not using them and store in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight.

Can I be allergic to silicone?

Discuss any current dermatological conditions (e.g. eczema, psoriasis) you have with your therapist. Some people find they are sensitive to silicone. If, whilst using the silicone gel sheeting, your scar becomes red or itchy with scaling skin or a rash, remove the sheet. Do not use it again until the symptoms have gone. When you start to use it again, use for **half an hour** only and then gradually increase by half an hour a day. If symptoms persist or the scar breaks down, or if you have any pain or spots that weep fluid, contact your therapist or GP as soon as possible.

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Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

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