

Skin Needling and Scar Relaxation

© IIPC

by: Susan Church C.C.P.C.

Scar Relaxation was introduced by Susan Church at the first Society of Permanent Cosmetic Professionals (SPCP) conference in 1991 after she discovered it while working on several burn survivors in concert with Dr. Grossman. As you will see, this is still a relatively new procedure even though our clinic has been utilizing these techniques for over 13+ years.

We have lectured numerous times on this subject and have had articles and photos featured in several publications over the past 13+ years. These include lecturing at the **Phoenix Burn Foundation** National Burn Congress, **Alicia Roush Burn Foundation, Surviving Burns Support Services, and articles for Burn Survivors Throughout The World, Inc. and The American Society of Esthetic Medicine Inc.** You can also check out our chapter in the book “**Aesthetic Facial Restoration**” by the world famous plastic burn surgeon Dr. Elliott H. Rose of Park Ave in New York. This book is written for plastic surgeons so they may be able to ‘utilized three-dimensional subtraction analysis to fashion vascularized bone grafts for microsurgical jaw and orbital rim reconstruction’.

Both **Needling** and **Scar Relaxation** is a specific well-designed application to help create supple skin texture.

We consider both of these procedures in the category of **Corrective Pigment Camouflage** also known as **C.P.C.**

Needling, also known as ‘**Skin Needling**’, is accomplished by the technician utilizing a certain technique while inserting the needle into the top layer of the epidermis. This technique is best accomplished when it is used quite shallow in the skin.

Needling may reactivate the melanocytes in the skin. (See photos). We worked on an African-American and with beautiful results. His skin repigmented where we actually performed the **Needling** procedure.

Scar Relaxation is a different as the technician needs to work in the dermal layer of tissue for lasting results.

The technique for both **Needling** and **Scar Relaxation** is the application of repetitive circular movements called ‘obovoids’.

Scar Relaxation is used primarily to soften the fibrous bands of collagen (scar tissue) to give the patient more flexibility in their movements. (see photos) This procedure works well on all contracted tissue with exceptional results on the hands.

Needling is primarily used to ‘plump’ up the skin. This is the body’s natural response to an inflammatory tissue injury.

International Institute of Permanent Cosmetics

Scar Relaxation and **Skin Needling** appointments are usually scheduled at 4-week intervals. Dramatic results can be realized after the first treatment.

Patients are excited with their results of the **C.P.C.** that has been performed on them, many times alleviating the need for potential surgeries on the contracted tissue.

This excerpt is from an article in the Society of Permanent Cosmetic Professionals (SPCP) Newsletter in 1996.

“In all post procedure phases of **C.P.C.** there is an inflammatory response of the skins tissue. The skins typical symptoms may range from mild redness, heat, swelling and discomfort to lymph drainage. All patients will experience a typical wheal and flare reaction (redness, histamine release and swelling) to the procedure area that is much like a bee sting or mosquito bite. Applications of **C.P.C.** will also cause increased blood flow to the immediate area. The procedure area will be a bit sore, swell slightly to moderately within the first 24 hours, may be very tender and be slightly pink to red.

Immediate after care instructions includes the use of either petrolatum or some type of an antibiotic ointment. If possible, cover the area to keep it exempt from free radicals and pollution for 12-24 hours. If the procedure area is swollen, you may use ice for the first 24-72 hours to help alleviate the pain and swelling. Using heat after this period will promote circulation and removal of waste products. Injured tissue will heal much faster and scar less if the patient keeps the area moist. The patient should apply a thin coating of petrolatum over the procedure area while showering or bathing to protect it from moisture.

Patients should never use their fingers to apply ointments or petrolatum to the procedural area. All products should be applied with a cotton swab or tissue.

Technicians need to be cautious of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (darkening of the tissue) when applying **C.P.C.** Hyperpigmentation occurs when the skin's tissue is traumatized. Hyperpigmentation occurs in Caucasian skin occasionally, although it will most likely occur on clients with heavy concentrations of melanin in their skin. Normal skin colour should return in several months following the application of **C.P.C.** Bleaching agents such as Hydroquinone, Kojic Acid and/or Licorice applied 1-2 times a day may be used to lighten the skin if needed”.

Susan Church CCPC
Director of Education
Education Advisor for the SPCP 2004-2005
Director of Clinical Research and Development



Before 'Scar Relaxation'

Patient was burned when she was 3 years old and could hardly open her mouth due to scar contractures.

© IIPC



After 'Scar Relaxation'

Patient can now open her mouth wider and for the first time in her life she can :

1. Eat a hot dog
2. Scream
3. Have creams absorb into her skin



Client prior to Facial Skin Needling application to plump out her fine lines.

Client 8 weeks post her first Needling application. Client states her naso- labial folds (vertical lines between the nose and mouth), and the lines around her mouth have plumped up considerably. She loves her look and is ready for more treatment applications to plump up other areas on her face.



Patient prior to 'Skin Needling' to reactivate the melanocytes in his skin. Patient has hypo pigmented areas on his arms, chest and back.

International Institute of Permanent Cosmetics



Patient immediately following his 'Skin Needling' procedure. We apply petrolatum over the procedural area to protect the skin from free radicals. He noticed the pigment changing within the first few weeks after his initial needling application.



Patient 6 months following his 'Skin Needling' procedure. His skin tones now blend into each other, and you do not notice the hypo pigmented areas as easily. One year later his skin still looks good.