THE EFFECTS OF CONSERVATIVE TREATMENTS ON BURN SCARS - A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW (169)

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Introduction: A variety of conservative treatments for burn scars are available, but there is no clear consensus on the evidence. The purpose of this study was to summarize the available literature on the effects of conservative treatments of burn scars in adults.

Methods: Randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and comparative controlled trials (CCTs) were sought in three databases, reference lists of retrieved articles and relevant reviews. The Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network scoring system was used to assess the quality of the selected studies. Information on the study characteristics, results and interventions was extracted.

Results: Twenty-two articles were included into the review and categorized in six topics: 5 on massage therapy, 4 on pressure therapy, 6 on silicone gel application, 3 on combined therapy of pressure and silicone, 3 on hydration and 1 on ultrasound.

Conclusions: Pressure and silicone therapy are evidence-based conservative treatments of hypertrophic scar formation after a burn injury producing clinically relevant improvement of scar thickness, redness and pliability. Massage therapy could have a positive result on scar pliability, pain and pruritus, but with less supporting evidence. The use of moisturizers and lotions could have an effect on itching, but the findings are contradictory. Of all other non-invasive treatments such as splinting, casting, physical activity, exercise and mobilizations no RCTs or CCTs were found.