



## MICRONEEDLING PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

### What is microneedling?

Microneedling is a technique that is used to alter the texture of the skin and scars by creating many small needle injuries to the top layers of the skin. It is also known as *percutaneous collagen induction* and *multitrepannic collagen actuation*. It has been used worldwide for approximately ten years.

### How is it carried out?

Microneedling is carried out as a day case procedure in clinic or rarely, in theatre. Usually, it is carried out by making the skin numb with local anaesthetic cream, but local anaesthetic injections are sometimes used. The anaesthetized skin is cleaned with antiseptic. The fine needle holes are created with an electric device that looks like a pen – the Amiea Med machine. This is passed over the skin until a defined amount of skin redness is achieved. The pen device provides a fine control over the amount of needling that we feel is more controlled than other devices on the market.

### How does it work?

Many areas of microscopic injury to the skin result in a thickening of the top layer of the skin (epidermis) and a remodelling of the collagen in the bottom layer (dermis). Also, there is a change in the chemicals within the skin that lead to an environment that is less prone to scarring. Multiple treatments produce this change in small increments.

### What are the benefits?

Microneedling alters the texture of the skin. It can slowly increase the tone of the skin and importantly, it can smooth out differences in skin texture as a result of previous scarring. A good example of where the improvement of texture is beneficial is after atrophic scarring such as acne scars or stretch marks. Unlike other techniques which change skin texture, *eg* chemical peels and ablative lasers, microneedling does not destroy tissue and is much gentler. This can lead to little 'downtime' between treatments and you can be back to most social activities within a couple of days.

### What are the risks of the procedure?

Because the treatment produces a gradual change in skin texture, multiple treatments are necessary and the effects are more subtle than approaches such as lasers. Common and normal side effects of the procedure are redness, swelling and discomfort for up to two days. Some redness may persist for a couple of weeks. The skin may be more sensitive to sunlight for some months. Occasionally, there may be dryness and crusting of the top layer of the skin that lasts for about one week. Permanent pigment change is unusual. Infection is very rare.

### Who cannot have the procedure?

Microneedling cannot be carried out if there is any active infection at the site. In the case of acne, the condition must have been inactive for at least one year. Any conditions that may make you more prone to poor wound healing may also prevent you from having microneedling. These include immunosuppression, certain blood diseases, chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Skin that is naturally

more pigmented may be prone to a change in pigment after needling. For this reason, it may be advised that a small test patch is carried out on the skin first.

### **How do I prepare for the procedure?**

An hour before microneedling, we recommend that you take simple pain-relieving medications such as paracetamol. If topical anaesthetic cream is going to be used, we recommend that this is applied at about the same time.

### **What can I expect afterwards?**

After the procedure, there may be many small pin-head sized areas of bleeding that stop within minutes. Later, the area may be mildly red, swollen and give some discomfort. This may last for a day or two.

### **What do I do afterwards?**

Regular pain relief tablets may be taken when required, but are usually not necessary. Discomfort usually only lasts for a couple of days. If the site that is treated is visible, some patients like to take time away from work and activities during this period. However, it is possible to return to all normal activities the same day if desired.

### **What dressings will I need?**

Often, no dressing is required but instead, simple cream is applied to the area. This is showered off regularly, the area dried and then a new, thin layer of cream applied. This routine is continued for several weeks.

### **What if I want any more information?**

The team can be contacted at any time for more information. Please ring 0117 906 4872 or email [info@scarteam.co.uk](mailto:info@scarteam.co.uk)