

## **What are Keloid Scars?**

When a wound heals, it leaves a scar. A keloid is a special type of scar: one that grows too much and can even become larger than the original wound.

A keloid can occur after surgery, after major skin trauma but also after very minor skin damage, such as an acne spots. It is also possible to develop a keloid even if there has been no obvious damage to the skin at all. Keloids look like exaggerated scars. They are raised above the skin around them and sometimes they are domed. They can extend beyond the limits of the skin damage that caused the scar to come up in the first place.

They are shiny and hairless; usually they feel hard and rubbery; and new ones are often red or purple, becoming browner and sometimes paler as they age.

Most people with keloids have only one or two. However some people have many, especially if they have come up after acne or chickenpox scars.

## **Who gets Keloid Scars?**

Dark skinned people get keloids much more easily than those with a paler skin.

They are especially common in people with black skin.

They affect both sexes equally although the incidence in young female patients has been reported to be higher than in young males, probably reflecting the greater frequency of earlobe piercing among women.

A tendency to develop keloids certainly runs in some families.

Keloids are not caught from someone else and carry no risk of turning into a cancer.

## **What skin injuries can cause Keloid Scars?**

Chickenpox  
Acne  
Minor scratches  
Surgical incisions  
Traumatic wounds  
Vaccination sites  
Burns

## **Where do Keloid Scars occur?**

Keloids usually occur on the upper chest and shoulders - particularly over the breastbone (sternum) - and on the earlobes.

In dark skin individuals they very often occur in the beard area and on the scalp.