



ALLEM says these are different types of procedures that can be helpful in alleviating scars:

**BOTOX**  
When BOTOX is injected into muscles, it prevents the muscles from pulling on the area around the wound, which eliminates excessive disruptions, allowing the area to heal.

**CARBOXYTHERAPY**

## TYPES OF TREATMENTS FOR SCARS

Tiny amounts of carbon dioxide are injected just beneath the skin. The body responds by increasing blood flow and growth factors to the area. This provides a surge of oxygen and nutrients to the area and improves circulation, resulting in cell restoration. The increased blood flow stimu-

lates collagen, which allows the scar to heal.

**TCA CHEMICAL PEELS**  
A Trichloroacetic Acid Peel is a quick, mild procedure that renews the skin by lifting dead cells off the surface of your skin and stimulating the metabolism of the cells underneath.

# How to prevent body scarring

## MARKS CAUSE DISCOMFORT AND EMBARRASSMENT

**Karabo Disetlhe**

**WE ALL tend to envy super models who have flawless bodies, but most importantly, flawless skin, no scars, pimples or stretch marks in sight.**

How is that possible? Most people have some form of scarring from either having squeezed the life out of the pimples throughout high school, or the stretch marks that may have resulted from weight gain or loss.

While most over the counter medication promises flawless skin in a few weeks, the sad reality is that not all of them work, and disappointment is inevitable.

This week we brought out the experts to deal with the various scarring issues that most people face.

With their help, we will first try to understand how scarring occurs on the skin, and how to go about getting treatment should you already have certain scarring that makes you miserable. Plus, how we can all prevent future scarring.

We spoke to Doctor Maureen Allem, the founder and medical director at Skin, Body & Health Renewal, as well as Janine Thompson, the owner of the skin clinic Lamprobe SA to find answers on the different types of scarring.



**ELASTIC:** Stretch marks are the result of the rapid stretching of the skin tissue

### ACNE SCARRING

"Acne scarring often results from severe inflammatory acne, but scarring also may arise from more superficial inflamed lesions," says doctor Allem.

"The only sure method of preventing or limiting the extent of acne scars is to treat acne early in its course, and as long as necessary. The more that inflammation can be prevented or moderated, the more likely it is that scars can be prevented."

Thompson adds that acne scarring can be avoided by treating the acne both orally and topically, using the correct home care formulations for your skin type.

"Going to a specialised aesthetician who performs effective deep pore cleansing and chemical peels is also more helpful than picking and squeezing at home.

"Post-acne scarring is difficult to treat, so prevention is better than cure, however the best post-acne scarring treatment that is safe on all skin types is micro needling, as this treatment works deep into the skin.

### STRETCH MARKS

We have all had them, or know someone who complains about not being able to wear a bikini because



**INFLAMMATORY:** Acne scarring often results from severe inflammatory acne, but scarring may also arise from more superficial inflamed lesions

PHOTO: THINKSTOCK

of their stretch marks. How are stretch marks formed and how can we minimise or get rid of them?

"Stretch marks are the result of the rapid stretching of the skin associated with rapid growth, common in puberty or weight gain (FOR EXAMPLE pregnancy) that overcomes the dermis' elasticity," Allem explains.

"Although stretch marks are generally associated with pregnancy and obesity, they can also develop during rapid muscle growth. They first appear as reddish or purple lines, but tend to gradually fade to a lighter colour."

Allem SAYS that stretch marks can appear anywhere on the body, but are most likely to appear in places where larger amounts of fat are stored. Most common places are the abdomen, especially near the belly-button, breasts, upper

arms, under-arms, thighs (both inner and outer), hips and buttocks. The marks pose no health risk and do not compromise the body's ability to function normally.

Allem says to avoid stretch marks, one should start with Carboxytherapy treatments as early as possible. "This is the procedure of injecting carbon dioxide gas into affected areas so as to improve and strengthen the collagen support structures of the dermis. This is the best treatment available for stretch marks."

### INSECT BITES

Allem says to avoid scarring from insect bites, one should stock up on insect repellants.

"Especially during summer time, or if you know you are going to be in an insect-infested area like the outdoors or camping.

"However, when bitten, avoid scratching and rather apply a soothing lotion to deal with the itching and discomfort."

### CHLOASMA

Chloasma are also known as *chubabas*, and can pose quite an embarrassing problem for most women. While piling on make-up seems to offer temporary relief from *chubabas*, what can we do to avoid having them, as what is the most effective treatment is available out there?

"Sun exposure, pregnancy and birth control medication can often result in chloasma. Post-pregnancy chloasma should go away on its own after a few weeks of delivery, but for more aggressive symptoms, one should consider a chemical peels as a means of treatment," says Thompson.