



Information about scars.

Having scars may be part of your experience of self-injury. How to deal with scars can raise important questions and feelings. People deal with their scars in different ways at different times, some people want to cover them and others want to find ways of being comfortable with them being seen. The information below is designed to help you think about what is right for you at the moment.

Covering scars

There may be times when you would like to cover up your scars. Wearing certain clothes or bangles can be a simple way to do this but during the summer or for activities like swimming, gymnastics or dance you could use skin camouflage cream.

Skin camouflage cream is similar to make up in that it comes in a variety of shades and will blend in with your natural skin tones. Camouflage cream is also waterproof so it makes swimming and other water activities possible.

There are many different brands on the market. Sometimes you can get cream on prescription from your doctor or direct from your chemist.

Red Cross Skin Camouflage Service who offer a free support service to select the best cream colour match for your skin. They will also show you how to apply the cream well and are trained in how to relate to people supportively. Click [here](#) for their site.

Alternatively you can go directly to a specialist company such as [Veil Cover Cream](#) 'Veil Cover Cream' and order it over the phone or online. You will have to pay but will have a lot of choice about cream colours.

Reducing Scars

There are things you can do to reduce the size and colour of your scars. Specialist plasters can flatten raised scars and reduce the redness of them. These are sometimes available from your GP or chemist. There's lots of information about scars & treatments [here](#)

If you are not sure if your cuts have healed enough to treat as scars to cover up or reduce, make sure that you get medical advice from your doctor or a walk in centre to avoid infection.

Learning to live with your scars

Having scars can be a permanent reality of self-injury. You can cover or possibly reduce them but once you have scars they will be with you in some form for the rest of your life.

Some people see their scars as evidence of their ability to survive very difficult times. Some people see their scars as links to some of their story. Some people feel hatred and shame about their scars and regret hurting themselves. There is no right or wrong way to view scars and people often go through different relationships with them at different times in their lives. Some people find writing down their thoughts and feelings about their scars a helpful way of making sense of them and you are also welcome to text or email us at TESS where we can support you to talk about your scars and help you to understand how you feel about them.

Telling people about your scars

What you choose to tell people about your scars is up to you. There is nothing to be ashamed about if you have self-injured, there will always be a valid reason for you having chosen to do so. You may spend time with people who you would rather didn't know about your self-injury, at school or work and so may make different choices about what you say depending on the environment or relationships. If people ask you directly about your scars you may want to have a couple of replies ready that feel comfortable to you:

'They are because I hurt myself when I feel upset.' / *'They are my way of dealing with the pain I feel in life sometimes.'* / *'They got me through when nothing else could / I wouldn't be here now if it wasn't for them'* / *'They are very personal to me and I don't want to talk about them.'*

Remember that your body is YOUR body. You don't have to talk about it or show anyone any part of it if you do not feel comfortable about doing so

Click [here](#) for the TESS page with lots more info sheets.