

VENICE PLASTIC SURGERY

A.E. HAAS, M.D.

Cosmetic, Reconstructive, Face, Breast, and Hand Surgery

Tattoo Removal Surgery

Tattoos are the result of many things. They may result after trauma, infection and from the persons own healing pattern. Traumatic scars and tattoos are often treated by the Plastic Surgeon. In general, we recommend surgical removal.

There are many ways people treat tattoos. One way is to tattoo over the original design. But then the design is still there, just a different color, sometimes less noticeable. Multiple treatments are usually required, even for the smallest sized tattoo.

Laser treatments are based on burning the scarred area with a very hot light called a Laser. Multiple treatments are again required regardless of the original size. Many have this treatment thinking that Laser is some sort of cure-all. A burn scar always results.

Dermabrasion or Sialobrasion scrape the skin surface and again require multiple treatments. In all of the above treatments the scar resulting is the size of the original scar or bigger. It may not be as prominent as the tattoo but it will be as big.

Abnormal healing from within the person is possible. Hypertrophic scars are one type of abnormal healing. In this case the wound from trauma or even elective tattoo treatments heal abnormally. The patients own body forms scar tissue in the normal healing process. But in abnormal Hypertrophic healing the body forms too much of the "normal" scar tissue. This is more of a problem with Laser or Dermabrasion treatments for tattoo removal.

In the case of Keloid scar formation we have an actual pathological condition. It will not ordinarily heal better with time and in fact they usually worsen with time. The body forms excess scar tissue but it is not the normal scar tissue we usually see. It is abnormal scar tissue and very difficult to treat by any method.

Most often we simply numb up the area and remove the tattoo as if it was a superficial skin lesion or growth. For larger tattoos another procedure may be required. The results are always the same. The tattoo is completely gone and replaced by a straight line scar that is obviously much less noticeable.

When scars are well healed but in very long straight lines they are sometimes visible. The way around this is to break up the long scar into several legs in varying directions. This is called Z or W plasty. The revision of a scar is also dependent on the part of the body involved. There are many variables.

One thing often ignored is sun exposure. A fresh wound from trauma, a tattoo, laser, dermabrasion or from a surgical procedure must be protected from sun exposure. The sun alone accounts for a lot of scar conditions. Avoidance and the use of high SPF clothing and sun block are a must. This is one thing that makes scars worse and is for the most part preventable.

**The above represents the opinion of A. E. Haas, M.D.
Venice Plastic Surgery, Venice Wound Center, Lakeside Medical Center**

Just call us directly. No referral needed unless required by your insurance company

836 Sunset Lake Blvd # 103, Venice, FL 34292
(941) 492-4775