

Medical tattooing improves perception of scar/graft appearance, quality of life

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Medical tattooing, also known as dermatography, is routinely used by plastic surgeons for nipple reconstruction after mastectomy. The procedure also can be used to improve color mismatch and the appearance of scars and skin grafts after head and neck surgical procedures, although it is often overlooked.

A new article published online by *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery* looks at the effects of scar and skin graft dermatography in the head and neck area on patient satisfaction and quality of life.

The study by Rick van de Langenberg, M.D., Ph.D., of the Diakonessen

Hospital in the Netherlands, and coauthors used two questionnaires to evaluate the perception of the appearance of scars and [skin grafts](#) after dermatography and the quality of life in patients who had head and neck surgical procedures. The study included 56 patients.

The study reports the answers to all [patient satisfaction](#) and quality-of-life questions on both questionnaires improved after dermatography.

"Therefore, the use of dermatography is warranted in the routine workup of patients with problematic scars and skin graft pigments after head and neck surgical procedures," the study concludes.

More information: Brigitte H. Drost et al. Dermatography (Medical Tattooing) for Scars and Skin Grafts in Head and Neck Patients to Improve Appearance and Quality of Life, *JAMA Facial Plastic Surgery* (2016). [DOI: 10.1001/jamafacial.2016.1084](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamafacial.2016.1084)

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