

Is Scar Tissue Affecting Your Performance?

By Dr. Jon DeGorter, DC

Jonas Chiropractic Sports Injury Care



Do you have an injury that just won't heal? Or a recurrent injury that returns after it's healed? Maybe you didn't bounce back from an injury to your previous performance level. You could have scar tissue, also known as adhesions.

When a muscle is damaged the body does not actually repair the injury with new muscle, but with scar tissue. Adhesions, or internal scar tissue, are inflexible fibers that bind damaged soft tissue together. Scar tissue/adhesions that form around an injury are not as strong as the tissue it replaces. It has a tendency to contract and deform the surrounding tissues, compromising strength and flexibility.

Repetitive motion and the cumulative injury cycle of untreated minor injuries cause scar tissue and adhesions to accumulate. As scar tissue builds up, muscles become shorter and weaker, tension is put on tendons, and nerves can become trapped, resulting in pain, reduced range of motion, loss of strength, and possibly tingling, numbness, and weakness. All of which has an adverse affect on your performance, fitness, and goals, whether it's to perform better at your sport, get stronger, lose weight, or simply be pain free.

Not all scar tissue is a result of acute injury. Adhesions can also form from insufficient oxygen (hypoxia) to soft tissues. Poor posture and sustained pressure (as in sitting) increase muscle tension. With increased muscle tension, blood supply is reduced, and less oxygen gets to the muscles. To move better and relieve pain, adhesions and scar tissue need to be removed.

Symptoms of adhesion/scar tissue accumulation

- Stiffness in the neck, elbow, hands, knees or back, sometimes associated with bursitis or tendonitis
- Increased pain when exercising
- Reduced flexibility and limited range of motion
- Loss of muscle strength
- Inflamed joints or frequent joint pain
- Tingling, numbness and weakness

Effects of Scar Tissue

With less elasticity and flexibility than healthy muscle, scar tissue decreases muscle length, limiting your range of motion and altering joint rotation. You may also experience decreased strength as scar tissue binds injured tissue together, leaving fewer working muscle fibers. Less working muscle tissue means less strength. Pain can also affect and limit your strength. If a nerve lies next to scar tissue, it can become entrapped, causing numbness, tingling, burning, aching, and pins and needles.

Recovery

The body doesn't have a natural way to remove scar tissue. **Active Release Technique®** and **Graston Technique** are two highly effective methods for reducing scar tissue, and preventing formation of scar tissue which helps prevent future injury. **Active Release Technique®** stimulates repair and accelerates healing by

restoring normal tissue texture and reestablishing full flexibility, balance and stability. What makes **ART®** different from physical therapy and other treatments is how it identifies and heals scar tissue adhesions that are interfering with normal strength and flexibility with precise, targeted movements, not simply stretching out the muscles. **ART®** is completely natural and non-invasive and can prevent the need for more invasive treatment.

At **Jonas Chiropractic Sports Injury Care** you receive a personal treatment plan geared to your training and recovery goals. We begin by understanding what you do in relation to your sport or daily activity, evaluate your posture to ensure equal and correct balance, and create a plan with a goal. We are dedicated to keeping up with the most effective procedures that provide significant positive results. These can include stretching, strengthening, manipulation, cardiovascular exercise, and other modalities to thoroughly cover all the bases. Our multidisciplinary approach leaves no stone unturned. Our approach is as unique as you are.

Dr. Jon DeGorter is part of the Jonas Chiropractic Sports Injury Care team, specializing in treating runners and triathletes. Dr. DeGorter is USATF-Long Island Chair of the Sports Medicine Committee