

Treatment for Keloid Scars Goes Painless

National Skin Centre develops the first of its kind drug-embedded microneedle patch as an alternative method to shrink keloid scars

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Patients at the National Skin Centre (NSC) will soon be able to opt for a painless treatment for their keloid scars. Researchers from NSC have developed an innovative method that uses dissolving microneedles, which are about a hundred times smaller than the needle used for conventional keloid injections, to administer the medication - triamcinolone - onto the affected area without pain. The triamcinolone-embedded dissolving microneedle patch is the first of its kind in the world.

Keloid scars can be unsightly, painful and itchy. A large keloid in the skin over a joint may even interfere with joint function. Currently, NSC manages more than 5,000 keloid cases a year. Patients who wish to shrink their keloid scars make monthly visits to NSC for triamcinolone injections, which require regular doses for the treatment to be effective. However, this treatment is painful and deters other patients from receiving it, particularly children, who are unable to withstand the pain of injections. The novel dissolving microneedle patch therefore addresses this unmet clinical need.

HOW IT WORKS

In the clinical trial, patients self-administered the triamcinolone-embedded dissolving microneedle patch to one of their keloids daily over four weeks, with another keloid left untreated to function as a control. Results of the trial demonstrated significant reduction in keloid volume after treatment with the dissolving microneedles, with higher doses of triamcinolone leading to greater reduction. All the patients unanimously agreed that the new treatment is painless, with 88 per cent preferring it over injections.

The dissolving microneedle patch, which is designed for one-time use, takes mere minutes to apply and can be self-administered by patients at home. This saves patients time and cost of travelling to NSC to undergo keloid injections by the healthcare team. The self-management nature of this treatment also means that patients, even when overseas, are able to treat their keloid scars effectively and conveniently.

“NSC is excited to introduce this revolutionary treatment in the management of keloids. Besides being pain-free as compared with conventional treatment; the new method empowers our patients in self-care. We are heartened that our research efforts have not only translated into better health outcomes for our patients, but have also transformed how medication is

administered for skin treatments. NSC remains committed to advancing dermatological care for our patients and population,” said Associate Professor Tan Suat Hoon, Director at National Skin Centre.

The dissolving microneedle patch is expected to be available on a prescriptive basis at NSC in end 2018.

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About National Skin Centre

The National Skin Centre (NSC) is an outpatient specialist dermatological centre with a team of dermatologists who have the experience and expertise to treat a wide variety of skin conditions. The Centre also aims to facilitate subspecialisation and be the national focus for the treatment, research, and training on all aspects of skin diseases. More information is available at www.nsc.com.sg.

As a subsidiary of the National Healthcare Group, NSC shares the NHG vision of ‘Adding Years of Healthy Life’ to the Singapore population. With a comprehensive range of subspecialty services, and serving about 80 percent of dermatology outpatients in Singapore, NSC is firmly established as a reputable dermatology centre in Singapore and the region. NSC also collaborates with the Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) to operate the Skin Research Institute of Singapore (SRIS), which focuses on conducting high impact, inter-disciplinary skin research designed to translate into improved health outcomes and quality of life.

About the National Healthcare Group

The National Healthcare Group (NHG) is a leader in public healthcare in Singapore, recognised at home and abroad for the quality of its medical expertise and facilities. Care is provided through an integrated network of six primary care polyclinics, acute care and tertiary hospitals, national specialty centres and business divisions. Together they bring a rich legacy of medical expertise to our philosophy of integrated patient-centred care.

NHG’s vision is ‘Adding Years of Healthy Life’. This vision goes beyond merely healing the sick to the more difficult and infinitely more rewarding task of preventing illness and preserving health and quality of life. With some 18,000 staff, NHG aims to provide care that is patient-centric, accessible, seamless, comprehensive, appropriate and cost-effective.

As the Regional Health System (RHS) for Central Singapore, it is vital for NHG to partner and collaborate with stakeholders, community advisors, and voluntary welfare organisations. Together with our patients, their families and caregivers, we aim to deliver integrated healthcare services and programmes that help in Adding Years of Healthy Life to all concerned.

More information is available at www.nhg.com.sg.

CHINESE GLOSSARY

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国立健保集团	National Healthcare Group
瘢痕疙瘩（蟹足肿瘢痕）	Keloids
曲安奈德	Triamcinolone
可溶性微针贴片	Dissolving microneedles patch