

- cover the areola with a protective dressing during the day, uncover the area while sleeping, but do not sleep on your stomach. This protects the tissue and promotes healing
- if a crust appears on the areola, do not pick or peel it off, as this will remove the pigment as well as the crust
- do not use soap, sunbathe, swim, sauna or jacuzzi during the two weeks after both your first and follow-up procedures
- to prevent infection, do not touch the pigmented area with your fingers until it is completely healed. Use cotton buds to apply ointments.

If you have any questions or require further information, please contact the Nurse Practitioners at the Jasmine Centre Tel: 01302 553261.

## AREOLA AND NIPPLE MICRO-PIGMENTATION

Micro-pigmentation is an invasive procedure that permanently colours the skin. It is performed for the treatment of medical disease or disfigurement.

A trained and experienced practitioner will carry out the procedure, but it is not without risk. The main risks include:

- not achieving an exact colour match
- fading of colour over time
- scarring
- pigment moving or spreading
- uneven pigment colour
- slight skin irritation.

You will be responsible for determining the colour match of your areola and nipple in consultation with your micro-pigmentation practitioner.

### How long will it take?

Most patients require 2-3 initial treatments and possibly a further follow-up treatment every year to achieve and maintain the desired outcome.

100% success cannot always be guaranteed and the extent of the procedure depends on what changes are wanted and the method the practitioner thinks appropriate.

### What factors may affect the results?

The result of pigmentation is partially determined by variations in skin type and can be affected by:

- medication you may be taking
- natural skin overtones
- skin characteristics (dryness, oiliness, sun damage, thickness, colour)
- pH balance of the skin (acidity)
- alcohol intake
- smoking
- individual healing ability
- illness.

If you have a heart condition, epilepsy, haemophilia or other clotting disorder, or if you have had hepatitis over the past 12 months, you must inform your practitioner before the procedure.

### **Allergy test**

You will be offered a skin patch test 24 hours before the procedure. It is advisable to have the test if you have had any type of allergy. The purpose of this test is to see if you have an allergy or other reactions to the local anaesthetic and pigments used during the procedure. A full 24 hours is required after the skin test to see if you have an allergic reaction.

### **Equipment**

All equipment used is sterile. Disposable needles are used for each patient and disposed of immediately.

### **The procedure**

Micro-pigmentation usually takes 30-60 minutes depending on individual requirements. Completion time varies according to:

- the position, width and depth of the nipple - areola area
- the depth of colour to be matched
- matching of the pigment to your skin type.

The pigment is applied using a pen-like device, which basically works like a miniature sewing machine: the needles move up and down very fast,

penetrating the upper layers (epidermis and dermis) of the skin, implanting the coloured pigment. The practitioner holds the machine with a steady hand while guiding it along the skin. The speed and power can be controlled by a foot switch or pedal. The pigments are built up using dots, lines and/or a circular motion.

### **What should you expect afterwards?**

You will have slight swelling and redness following the procedure and the skin may feel 'tight'. These symptoms will ease off within 1-7 days depending on how sensitive your skin is.

You should be able to resume normal activities immediately following the procedure. However, use of cosmetics, excessive perspiration and exposure of the affected area to the sun should be avoided until it is fully healed.

Also, if you swim or the area is in contact with chlorine or saltwater during the healing phase, the pigment is at risk of bleaching.

Over the first few days the pigmented area of skin will form a scab. This will last for 14-21 days and the dead cells (the scab) will come off as healing takes place. You will then notice slight fading of the pigment and softening of the colour.

It is important that the healing process takes its natural course. Scarring can occur if the scabs are removed or knocked off prematurely.

### **Skin Care Instructions**

The following instructions must be carefully followed for at least two weeks post procedure to ensure successful results:

- before showering or bathing, apply a light coating of Vaseline to the areola. This protects the area by enabling the water to run off the damaged tissue