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OUR EXPERIENCE WITH TOPICAL APPLICATION OF HERBAL CREAM MANAGEMENT OF POST-BURN HYPERTROPHIC SCARS

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Objective: To find the efficacy of a Herbal Cream as a sole agent in treating post-burn hypertrophic scars.
Method: A topical herbal cream was applied twice a day in twenty five patients with post-burn hypertrophic scars of more than eighteen months duration. The cream was gently rubbed into the scar till it disappeared and then a thin layer was reapplied on it and left as such. No water or saline was used to remove the residue at the time of next application. No other treatment modality was used to treat the scar. The scars were assessed periodically using Vancouver Scar Scale as well as patients own assessment. The pregnant women were excluded.

Results: Smoothened and shiny skin with reduction in itching were the first changes observed at two weeks of application of the cream in all. They softened and the thickness further reduced with absolutely no itching at twelve weeks. The scars were supple with normal vascularity and with more than 50% decrease in the thickness at sixteen weeks. There was reduction in their volume as well.

Discussion: Different treatment modalities have been used in the treatment of hypertrophic scars with mixed results. Silicon gel sheets are costly, have side effects like itching and macular eruptions in some, and cumbersome to an extent. Intralesional Triamcinolone injection is painful, has dose restriction and is not free of local and systemic side effects. Pressure garments are not user friendly in children, women and in tropical climate. Interferons, 5-FU are not widely accepted by the medical fraternity. The herbal cream that has been used is safe, free of side effects and has very good patients compliance.

Conclusion: The herbal cream improved the hypertrophic scars to patients satisfaction without any toxicity or side effects. Its most remarkable achievement was reduction in itching which perhaps was the reason for the high patients compliance. It has a promising potential for use as a sole agent in the management of hypertrophic scars.