

SUTURE LINE CARE

Lawrence D. Chang, MD

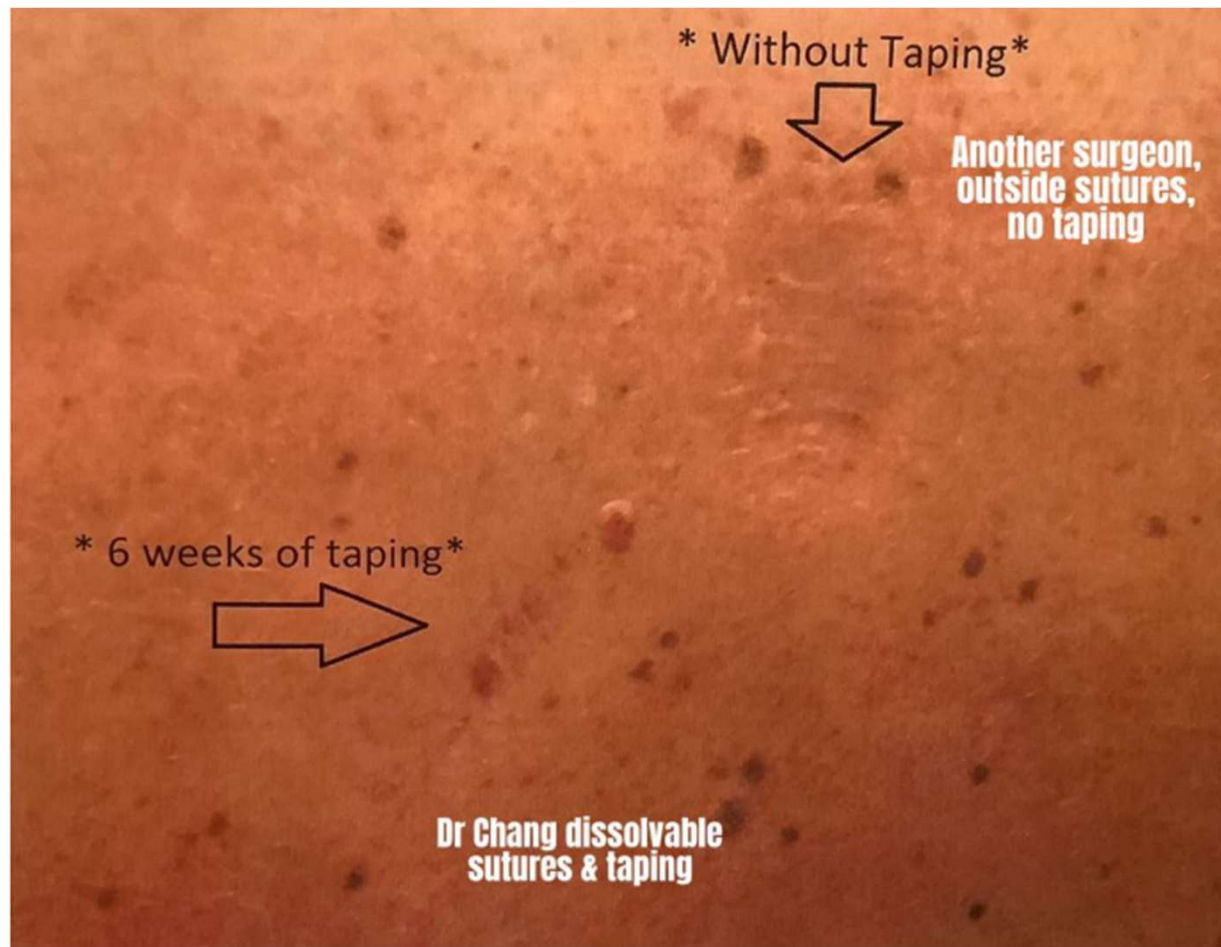
Board Certified Plastic Surgeon

Advanced Plastic & Dermatologic Surgery Center and Nouveau Medspa

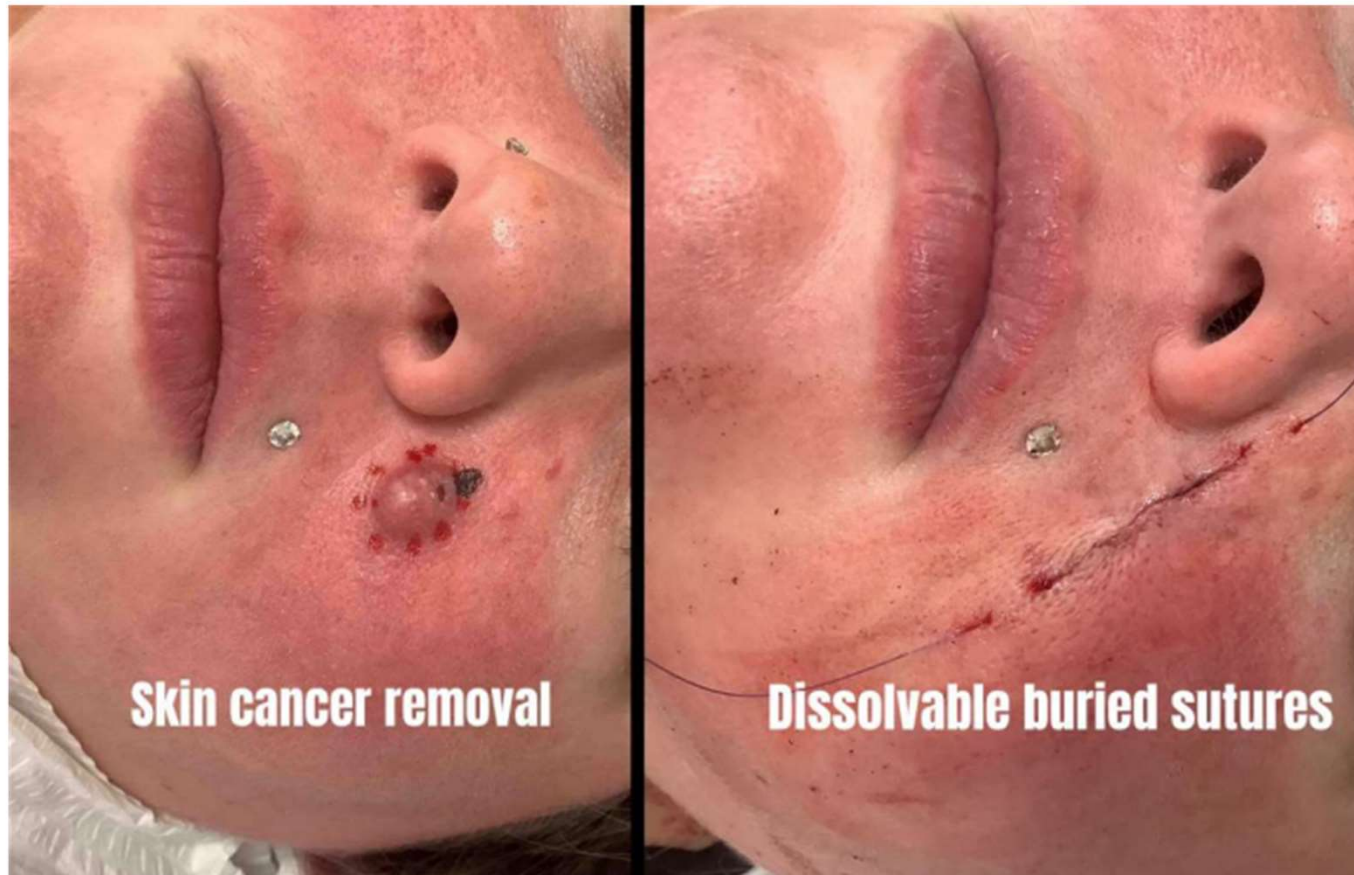
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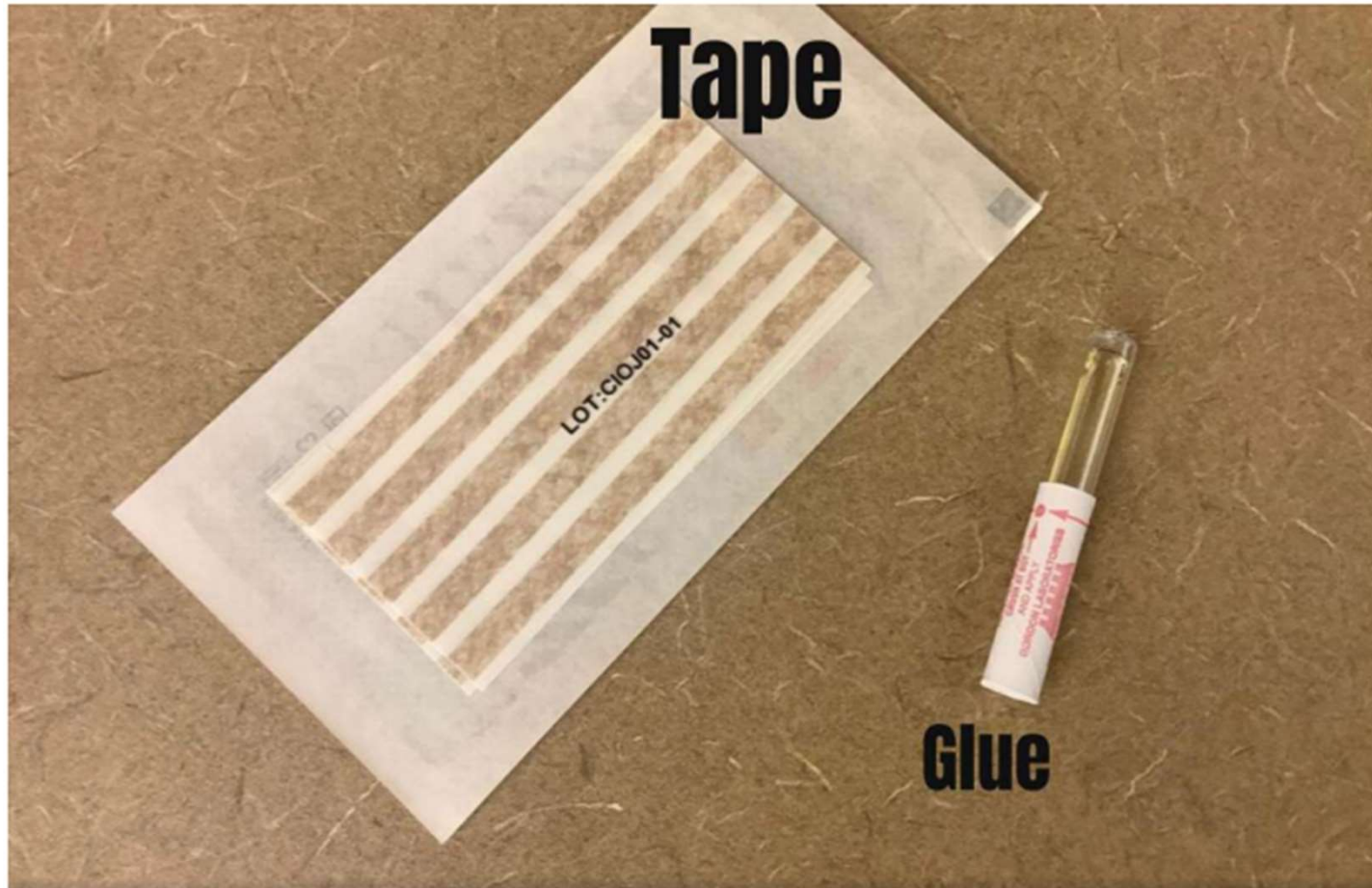
- Preferred sutures are dissolvable and under the skin – which is easier for patients and leaves the best possible scar when using our taping protocol
- Usually placed over flat skin surfaces with less tension
- External (black) sutures that require removal are placed on skin surfaces that are not flat, areas with more tension or motion, and areas that surgical tape cannot be applied such as hair



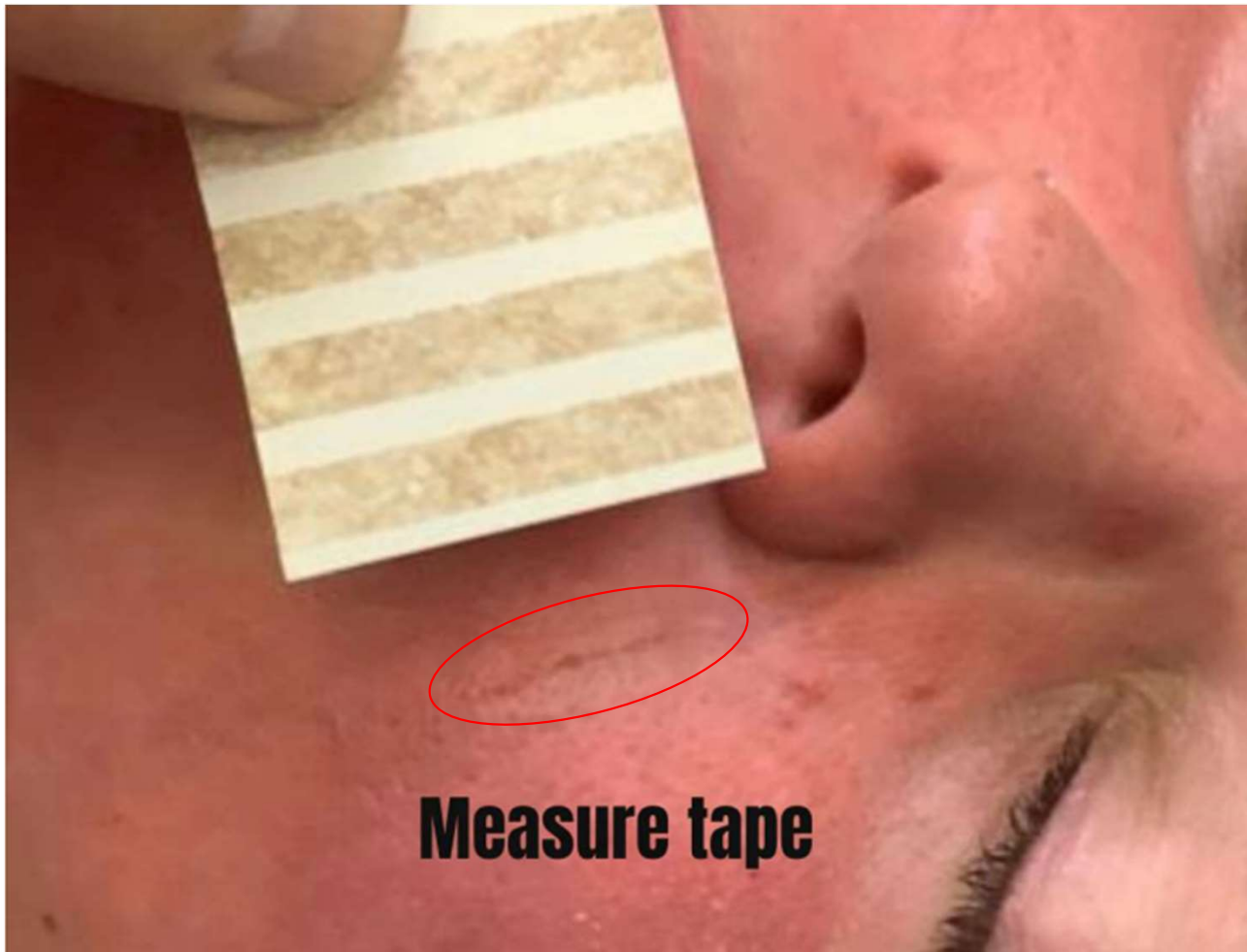
- Taping suture lines and scars especially in high tension areas will help minimize scars better than any scar creams
- Patients need to be comfortable with some basic wound care. Like “gently” cleaning off a dirty kitchen table!
- Tape may be applied on top of external (black) sutures as well



- If sutures are placed on a flat surface on your body, dissolvable buried sutures will be placed
- You will not require these sutures to be removed



- Butterfly tapes or Steri-strips can be readily purchased at any local area pharmacy
- Tapes may be applied on top of both dissolvable internal suture lines as well as removable external (black) suture lines



Measure tape

- The suture line will be gently cleaned with a saline or peroxide moistened gauze and any blood will be wiped away and patted dry
- For low tension areas, tape will be measured and applied along the length of the incision
- For higher tension areas, tape will be measured and applied crosswise the incision



- The custom cut tape along the length of the scar is usually longer than the custom cut tape that is placed crosswise the incision



- The tape is applied to the incision either lengthwise shown here or crosswise in high tension, more mobile areas
- This tape application gets easier after the first 2-3 days when the incision line becomes drier
- You will only have to change the tape every 3-7 days after the first 72 hours
- You may shower after 24 hours as long as the tapes are protected with a bandaid



- No strenuous activity or heavy lifting for the first 24 hours after your procedure to minimize chances of abnormal bleeding
- The gauze pad bandaid are meant to apply gentle pressure over your sutures for the first 24-48 hours
- You might have to re-apply the gauze and bandaid if it falls off during this time period, but DON'T touch the tapes



- On flat surfaces with low tension, place tapes along/parallel to the sutures
- For areas of motion and higher tension, place tapes across/perpendicular to the sutures
- It's best not to touch or remove these tapes until your next office visit unless the tapes start to peel off or become saturated with bloody drainage



- If tapes need to be changed, gently peel off the old tapes using gloves
- Use moistened gauze with water or peroxide to gently clean away any drainage or loose debris
- Pat dry with gauze
- This may need to be repeated 1-2 more times if tape is not firmly adherent over sutures and skin



- With proper care and allowing the tapes to protect the sutures, there is no need for Vaseline or Neosporin ointment or frequent dressing changes
- Just leave the tapes alone and keep open to air
- This method produces the best scar with meticulous care at a very low cost



- Tapes should be placed across the suture line or perpendicular to the sutures in areas of motion or higher tension
- Tapes are applied on top of both OUTSIDE (black) and internal suture lines



- If your tapes start to peel off or become soaked or blood stained before your next office visit, gently remove the soiled tapes using gloves
- Gently wipe away any drainage, old blood and/or debris with a gauze moistened with peroxide or water
- Pat dry and reapply tapes
- If tapes look good, DON'T CHANGE THEM until your next office visit
- If needed, you may repeat this process again in order to get the tape to be secured and dry