References

1. Cerda E. Mechanics of scars. *J Biomech* 2005; **38**:1,598–1,603.
2. Burgess LP, Morin GV, Rand M *et al*. Wound healing. Relationship of wound closing tension to scar width in rats. *Arch Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg* 1990; **116**: 798–802.

Comment 2

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We read the technical tip by Nawaz *et al* with interest. The approximation of skin in thin-skinned individuals is often difficult due to the natural contracture of thin skin coupled with local soft tissue swelling and the potential for suture 'cut-out'. We have used a technique of applying wide Steri-StripTM (3M, St Paul, MN, US) skin closures perpendicular to the wound edges to approximate the skin edge and subsequently suturing through the Steri-StripTM.¹ This technique has been particularly helpful for tibial lacerations with skin flaps and for the dorsum of the hand in patients with thin or poor quality skin. The use of Steri-StripTM skin closures across and perpendicular to the wound reduces shear forces on the epidermis. The wounds can then be monitored in a 'soft tissue/dressings' clinic, with sutures removed after a period of time as outlined by the operating surgeon.

Reference

1. Davis M, Nakhdjevani A, Lidder S. Suture/Steri-Strip combination for the management of lacerations in thin-skinned individuals. *J Emerg Med* 2011; **40**: 322–323.

Comment 3

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It was interesting to see a short report of ours¹ effectively republished in the November 2011 issue of the *Annals*. Redundant publications are a continuing problem in the medical literature. It is principally the responsibility of authors to have researched the published literature thoroughly to prevent this from happening. It is, however, also up to the reviewers to act as a safety net where the authors have not performed their due diligence competently.

Reference

1. Pacifico MD, Teixeira RP, Ritz M. Suturing of fragile skin. *J Plast Reconstr Aesthet Surg* 2009; **62**: e637–e638.

Editor's note

Please refer to the editorial in this month's technical section for the Editor's response to these three letters.

Readers may also be interested to read the following correspondence on the *Annals* Readers' Pages:

Urinary catheters in carotid endarterectomy – a stimulus for aggression?
Mohan A, Goodman R, Walsh AKM