

**MATRIX METALLOPROTEINASES IN CUTANEOUS WOUND REPAIR**

Veli-Matti Kähäri

*Dept of Dermatology, University of Turku and Turku University Central Hospital P.O.B. 52,  
FI-20521 Turku, Finland*

Cutaneous wound repair is a complex and highly coordinated process where different cell types participate to renew the damaged tissue under the strict regulation of soluble and insoluble factors. One of the important processes involved in wound repair is proteolysis. During cell migration, proteins of extracellular matrix are cleaved, often creating biologically active cleavage products and proteolysis of cellular contacts leads to increased cell motility and division. Moreover, proteases activate various growth factors and other proteases in wound and regulate growth factor signaling by shedding growth factor receptors from cell surface. Proteolysis is normally strictly controlled, and changes in protease activity are associated with alterations in wound closure and scar formation. Here, the current view on the role of metalloproteinases and plasmin-plasminogen system in normal and aberrant cutaneous wound repair, and their role as potential therapeutic targets for chronic ulcers or fibrotic scars will be discussed.