



TAROLA PLASTIC SURGERY

NICHOLAS A. TAROLA, MD

CO2 Laser Resurfacing Instructions

Introduction

Following all of the instructions listed below is critical to the outcome of your resurfacing procedure. Please read thoroughly prior to your procedure to prepare your home, products, and your skin. The ideal skin care regimen prior to laser resurfacing should include Retin-A products, glycolic acid products, and Vitamin C. These should be discontinued 5 days before and resumed 1-2 weeks following the procedure. They help promote healing after the treatment as well as enhance the cosmetic result.

Before the Procedure

- For one month prior to the procedure, sun-exposure and tanning should be avoided.
- Make a vinegar- water solution: use 1 cup of distilled or purified water with 1 tsp of vinegar. Keep the solution refrigerated.
- Do not wear make-up or moisturizer to your appointment. Face should be clean.
- If you have a history of cold sores, you will be given a prescription for Acyclovir or Valacyclovir starting two days before your procedure and continued 14 days after.
- You can take Extra Strength Tylenol for discomfort one hour prior to your appointment. Continue to take Tylenol for discomfort following the procedure, or ask Dr. Tarola for a pain medicine prescription.
- Avoid sun exposure for 6 months after the procedure. A sunscreen SPF 30 or greater should be applied every day. The skin is very vulnerable to sunlight after laser treatment. Protecting your skin and limiting sun exposure ensures the best cosmetic result.

After the Procedure

- Have someone with you for the first 24 hours.
- Take Tylenol for discomfort.
- Apply cool moist compresses frequently. Avoid ice directly on the skin.
- For the first 24 hours, apply ointment to keep skin coated and prevent drying. Avoid direct sunlight.
- Use clean bedding throughout the healing process. Sleep with the head of your bed elevated to reduce swelling.
- Rest. Avoid strenuous exercise, bending, straining or lifting heavy objects for 3 days following the procedure.

Day 1-3 (First Day After Procedure)

- The appearance of the skin will be a darker tan color similar to sunburn.
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- Wash treated area with a gentle cleanser and lukewarm water. Examples of a gentle cleanser include Neutrogena or Cetaphil. Reapply restorative ointment. The goal is to keep the treated areas moist and prevent crusting. Do not use regular soap or normal facial wash until 10 days after your procedure.
- Use damp gauze to remove any crusting that develops. Apply generous amounts of Aquaphor healing ointment no fewer than 6 times a day.
- Apply cooled vinegar and water solution every 3-4 hours (3-4 times per day).

Days 3-6

- The skin will become increasingly dark until it begins to peel usually on the fifth day.
- Do not assist the peeling by picking. Pinpoint bleeding may occur with peeling and is normal. Continue with the same instructions as for Days 1-3.
- Wash area with a gentle cleanser and lukewarm water. Reapply restorative ointment. The goal is to keep the treated areas moist and prevent crusting. Do not use regular soap or normal facial wash until 10 days after your procedure.
- Use damp gauze to remove any crusting that develops. Apply generous amounts of Aquaphor healing ointment no less than 6 times a day.
- Apply cooled vinegar and water solution every 3-4 hours (3-4 times per day).

Days 6-10

- Continue the same instructions as above throughout the peeling process.
- Once the peeling process is complete, the treated area is all a pink color and no longer raw. Stop the Aquaphor ointment but keep the skin well moisturized with a lotion such as Lubriderm or Cetaphil. Also begin using a non-irritating sunblock (SPF 30+) and use mineral make-up (powder) to protect treated areas (do not use liquid foundation as it may clog pores and irritate new skin).
- If itching continues or is bothersome, apply hydrocortisone 1% cream once or twice a day in addition to the moisturizing lotion.

Days 10-28

- Continue moisturizing.
- Resume regular skin care program.
- Avoid exposure to excessive sun for up to 4 weeks.
- May return to exercise programs.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 615-624-8914. After hours, leave a message and Dr. Tarola will return your call.
