

AFTERCARE FOR LASER RESURFACING/ TCA PEELING

Today you have had laser resurfacing and/or a trichloroacetic acid (TCA) peel. Even though the treatments differ slightly, we have combined this aftercare sheet to simplify your home care.

After discharge from this centre, you should go home and rest. You must be accompanied home by a responsible adult, and must have someone with you for the remainder of the day and overnight.

Even if you feel normal, your reaction time will be slower after receiving sedation drugs.

It is normal to feel slightly sleepy or dizzy during the first 24 hours, so:

- Do not drive a car or catch public transport
- Do not drink alcohol
- Do not operate hazardous machinery
- Do not travel alone
- Do not make important decisions or sign important documents
- Do not engage in strenuous activities, including heavy lifting or sport.

MEDICATIONS

Either prior to, or at the time of discharge, you may be given scripts for the following:

- Prophylactic antibiotics to prevent infection. These need to be taken as prescribed until they are finished.
- Anti-viral tablets which are to be taken as directed, commencing before the surgery until completion. This medication is quite expensive, but a rebate is possible from some private health funds.
- Pain killers which may be necessary when the local anaesthetic wears off.
- Hydrogen Peroxide 3%, Vaseline and a mild skin cleanser are available over the counter.

EARLY CARE

- Following your procedure, apply cold compresses using gauze or a washcloth soaked in cold water, as often as desired on the treated area. In between compresses, and before retiring, apply a thick layer of vaseline to all treated areas.
- The next morning, wash your face with water, then dilute hydrogen peroxide (about two capfuls to 100ml water) and dab areas that have been treated, which will help loosen the debris.
Apply a thick layer of chilled vaseline over the treated area, and ensure that all areas are covered in between washes.
- After 48hours, you no longer need to use compresses. Wash your face in the morning, and last thing at night with a mild skin cleanser, then dab diluted hydrogen all over the treated areas. After washing this off with luke warm water, apply vaseline, without excessive rubbing. You can apply vaseline ointment as often as you need, to keep the dead layer of tissue soft.
- The area where you had the TCA, will peel for about seven days. You will also notice a redness (erythema) for about three to five days.

There are some other strict rules, which you should follow:

- Cotton gloves may need to be worn at night to prevent accidental scratching.
- No picking, rubbing or unnecessary touching of your face. Refrain from removing scabs. They are there to protect the new skin underneath, and will separate naturally with time.
- No sunlight exposure for at least six weeks post-operatively and wear sunscreen at all times
- No exercise which will cause sweating
- Do not let the shower spray hit you directly in the face. Do not use very hot water
- You may wash your hair 48 hours after the procedure using a mild shampoo, attempting not to get your face wet. Avoid using a hair drier near your face, and use only on a low setting, because the heat may increase redness. Do not colour streak or use chemicals on your hair for four weeks.
- Sleep on your back so that the peeling skin is not accidentally rubbed on your pillow
- Try to minimize facial movement - a liquid or soft diet is recommended for the first two weeks following perioral resurfacing. This is to avoid chewing and excessive opening of the mouth, and

hence prevent cracking. Where possible, use flexible straws when drinking, to avoid opening the mouth.

- Smoking will reduce the success of your resurfacing, particularly the perioral area, where the wrinkle removal may be less permanent.

FIRST POST OP VISIT:

Ideally we like to see you the day after laser resurfacing, but realise that this is not always practical. If you are unable to come in, we maintain telephone contact with you, to ensure that you are progressing satisfactorily. It is necessary to see you at any time if you have absolutely any concerns, problems, or if pain persists.

ONE WEEK TO TEN DAYS:

- By now your skin should be completely healed.
- You will have been given a pack, and full instructions of what products to use and when.
- If you had a TCA peel, commence using Retin-A cream at night.
- Always wear a sunblock if you go outside.
- The Doctor may have prescribed a cream called hydroquinone if you have dark skin to prevent hyperpigmentation.
- Makeup may be used following re-epithelialisation (healing). It is placed above the other creams. You may require a "concealer" if your skin is very red, and then your makeup is applied on top of that. It is important to know that the erythema or redness can last for up to three months, especially if the CO2 laser was used.

SIX WEEKS:

A final post-operative visit today to make sure that you are happy with the procedure, and photographs are taken for your file.

Should you have any problems or queries whatsoever, call us at the
Aesthetic Surgery Centre on 9311 4444.

Should you have any problems, call us at the Aesthetic Surgery Centre on
8347 4416.

If for some reason, you are unable to contact us, then please call your
General Practitioner.