

## CO2 Laser – Pre and Post-Op Instructions

### Prior to Treatment

- Prepare a large container (i.e. gallon-size) of vinegar and water mixture (1 cup water, 2 tsp vinegar), cover and refrigerate to use cold following your laser procedure.
- Have plenty of clean washcloths or hand-size towels available for vinegar and water soaks following your treatment.

### CO2 Pre-Treatment Instructions

- Please notify use of any history or diabetes, herpes, blood coagulation disorders, keloid or hypertrophic scarring.
- For the one month prior to treatment, avoid sun exposure, as well as tanning beds and tanning creams. If you are tanned, you may not be treated. Use a sunscreen designed to protect against UVA and UVB rays with 30+ SPF at all times and reapply as directed by the manufacturer. Sun exposure is defined as direct sun exposure without protection for ten or more minutes.
- Discontinue the use of Retin-A or any retinol type products at least 1 week prior to your treatment.
- Discontinue the use of all exfoliating products, and glycolic and alpha-hydroxy acid products, 1 week prior to your treatment.
- Wait at least one week after Botox injections before having a fractional CO2 laser treatment.
- The most common reason for post treatment infection or acne eruption is caused by the use of products that have accumulated bacteria. Thoroughly clean all your existing make-up brushes or purchase new brushes and application sponges prior to using following your laser treatment.
- Start the hydroquinone (if prescribed) at least 10-14 days prior to the procedure. Do not use the hydroquinone the evening before the procedure and do not use the morning before the procedure. You should also be using the sunscreen that was provided in conjunction with the hydroquinone.
- You should not wear any jewelry or contact lenses on your treatment day. Instead bring your eyeglasses.
- On the day of your treatment, please come to the office with clean skin (clean shaven if male). Your treatment area should be free of any makeup, creams, perfumes and lotions.

- Comfortable clothes should be worn. If your face or neck is being treated, wear a button down shirt.

### **General Expectations**

- Avoid direct sunlight and keep skin moist and cool to aid healing.
- Avoid environmental irritants during healing process (e.g., dust, dirt, aerosols, cleaning agents).
- Avoid dryness and excessive heat (no high heat on blow dryer, medium heat is fine during healing process).
- Avoid any vigorous exercising for 2 weeks.
- Stay hydrated, eat healthy foods, and avoid alcohol.
- Redness and a sunburn-type sensation will normally last several hours. Neck redness is more persistent and will usually last several days longer than face redness. Face will normally bronze and peel within 3-5 days (Note: skin below neck normally requires up to 2 weeks to bronze and peel).

### **DAY OF TREATMENT:**

Keep treated areas covered with topical ointment/cream as instructed by physician.

Apply cooling compresses (e.g., bag of frozen peas or wet paper towels frozen in Ziploc bag)

Note: do not apply ice directly to skin and do not use towels as detergents may irritate skin.

If desired, you may spray water mist on skin using distilled or spring water.

May take an analgesic (e.g., Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen) for discomfort.

### **FIRST NIGHT:**

Sleep with head slightly elevated.

Place a paper towel over the pillow to protect from ointment/cream.

If experiencing irritation to the eye, may use an eye lubricant (e.g., Systane™).

### **DAY 1 (FIRST DAY AFTER TREATMENT):**

Avoid direct sunlight and excessive heat.

Begin washing your face 2-3 times a day with room temperature water and Cetaphil.

May take a shower and wash hair. Avoid hot water.

Re-apply Aquaphor to the treated area. Ensure skin remains constantly moist.

**DAY 2:**

Swelling should subside and skin may bronze and feel gritty.

Itching (particularly along the jawline) tends to begin on this day.

Continue applying ointment/cream (and cool compresses, if needed).

Continue washing face with Cetaphil and room temperature water.

For extreme itching, hydrocortisone cream (OTC 1%) may be applied. AVOID picking and/or scratching.

**DAY 4-7:**

Itching has usually subsided.

You may start more aggressive washing with fingertips to promote further exfoliation (do not pick).

Use non-irritating sun block SPF 30+ with zinc oxide (7-9%) and/or titanium dioxide when going outside.

You may apply mineral makeup (powder).

**DAY 7-28:**

Continue appropriate moisturizer until skin has hydrated back to its normal level (3-4 weeks).

You may start a regular skin care program as long as the treated area is healed (no exfoliation).

Continue applying non-irritating sunblock (SPF 30+) and use mineral makeup (powder) to protect treated areas (do not use liquid foundation as it may clog pores and irritate new skin).

Avoid exposure to excessive sun for up to 4 weeks (hat or clothing must be used to protect treated areas).

You may return to exercise programs.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call one of our offices at (281) 404-5454.

oOo