

Alamo Hills Advanced Aesthetics & Laser

Mixto CO2 Laser Post-Treatment Instructions

Post-Treatment Phases

- 1. Burning Phase (up to 3 hours):** apply a cold gel / ice pack to face, keep face moist. After heat has been dissipated apply **Aquaphor®**.
- 2. Day 1-2 – Re-Epithelialization/Crust Formation Phase:** in the morning and at night - cleanse face with **Cetaphil** gentle cleanser, then reapply **Aquaphor**. Soak with diluted vinegar solution every few hours and then reapply a thin layer of **Aquaphor®**. You will probably look the worst 48 hours after treatment.
- 3. Day 3-6 – Exfoliation Phase (Aquaphor® no longer needed):** at least 3 times a day - cleanse with Cetaphil, soak with diluted vinegar solution, then apply a thin layer of **Medical Barrier Cream**. Exfoliation/ shedding will be completed during this phase – don't pick! Can use hypo-allergenic makeup during this period. Apply full spectrum UVA & UVB sun block (at least SPF 30) if planning on being outside in the sun. **Aquaphor** may be applied in areas of dryness.
- 4. Final Healing Phase (days 7 to 14):** soaking with dilute vinegar solution **no** longer necessary. Continue to cleanse daily and apply **Medical Barrier Cream**. Continue to use sun block when outdoors. Makeup may be worn safely now on a daily basis if desired. Any residual redness and/or itching may continue beyond 14 days and is part of the healing process.

Note: for patients who received topical pretreatment of a skin whitening agent prior to laser surgery, starting at day 10 post-treatment resume this same regimen for the next 4 weeks.

Additional Post-Operative Instructions:

Note: Failure to precisely follow prescribed post-op care instructions can lead to poor healing, complications and scarring!

- **Elevate Head:** When sleeping the first night after treatment, elevate the head by 45° using 1 pillow under the small of your back and 2 pillows under the head and shoulders to help reduce any swelling. Placing a pillow under each elbow will help you stay in position if desired.
- **No Alcoholic Beverages** for at least the first 48 hours post-op (longer is better).
- **No Strenuous Exercise:** Minimal activity for the first 48 hours. During this time do not participate in any strenuous exercise (such as bending, squatting, straining, or heavy lifting) and avoid activities that cause excessive perspiration. No contact sports. The less energy you use for doing things, the more energy your body will have for healing.
- **Minimize Facial Expressions:** If the skin around the mouth is tight, minimize facial expressions until healed.
- **No Hot Tubs, Jacuzzis, or Swimming Pools** (with chemicals/chlorine) until redness is

completely gone.

- **OK to Bath/Shower:** You can shower or bath at any point in time post-operatively but avoid hot showers or baths for the first 24 hours. Preferably take short warm showers. (Cool showers may be soothing and help remove heat). If you take a shower during the exfoliation (peeling) phase, avoid running hot water directly on the treated area. A direct forceful stream of water can lead to the exudate being prematurely peeled off leading to scarring. After bathing, gently pat dry the treated area with a soft cloth. Never wipe hard with a towel. Wash your hair everyday with baby shampoo (or other non-irritating shampoo) until completely healed.
- **Cleanse/Soak/ Moisturize** - This will help keep the skin moist, will aid in removing any exudate build-up (crusting) and will also allow the topical moisturizers (applied immediately after soaking) to better penetrate the surface of the skin
 - ✓ **Cleanse** - Gently wash the treated area with Cetaphil (or equivalent) Lather your hands then pat gently on your skin. Afterwards, softly pat dry your face with a clean towel or washcloth without any rubbing.
 - ✓ **Soak –**
 1. Prepare a water/vinegar solution as follows:
Mix 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of plain white vinegar with 1 cup (237 ml) of cool tap water. If this solution stings or burns, dilute vinegar solution by using 1 teaspoon to 2 cups (1 pint) of water. This solution may be mixed a head of time and put in the refrigerator.
 2. Take a clean wash cloth or soft gauze and soak it in the water/vinegar solution. Ring out any excess and then lay it over the treated area for 10 to 15 minutes. Do not rub vigorously but using the wash cloth you may gently remove (don't pick) any loose crusting.
 3. When done soaking, gently pat the treated area dry with a clean soft towel. You can't soak too much. Soaking will reduce redness and speed healing.

Gentle cleaning and soaking with a diluted vinegar solution (which is mildly acidic) will help dissolve any unwanted material from the wounded skin use, alleviate pain (soothing), promote healing, and inhibit bacterial growth (especially against pseudomonas and gram negatives). Vinegar has a tonic action that promotes blood circulation in the small capillaries that irrigate the skin. It is also antiseptic, preventing the proliferation of bacteria, viruses, or yeast that triggers infection. It can dissolve excessive fatty deposits at the skin surface, dissolve and cleanse any necrotic material, and reduce scaly or peeling conditions. Lastly, vinegar regulates the pH of the skin.
 - ✓ **Moisturize – Re-apply Aquaphor®** for first 2 or 3 days, then after than stop using Aquaphor® and replace it with **Medical Barrier Cream**.

- **Pain:** Other than a mild burning sensation for the first few hours, most patients experience no other pain. For mild pain, you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol or equivalent) for discomfort.

Do not take aspirin or aspirin related drugs during the healing period.

Note: Intense pain may be a sign of infection and in such cases you should be seek medical care immediately.

- **Pruitis (itching):** Some patients experience a high level of itchiness for 2 – 3 days post-op. This is normally due to the release of histamines during the healing process, which can be explained to the patient as a good sign. (It could also be a sign of dry skin due to inadequate use of moisturizers).

1% hydrocortisone can be applied topically once or twice a day for 2 days and/or take an over the counter oral antihistamine, e.g., Benadryl. Remember that taking an oral antihistamine can cause drowsiness.

- **Return Office Visit:** Return for an office visit on day 7 after treatment.
- **Remain Close to Office:** Remain within a reasonable driving distance from the office for approximately 7 – 10 days in case of any side effects.
- **Possible Complications:** Call the office immediately if you have any fever, chills or pain after treatment that is not relieved by the prescribed pain medication or if any of the following occur; excessive redness, blistering, swelling, bleeding, itching, yellow or cloudy discharge (increasing pain with deterioration in the appearance of the skin may be the first signs of infection). Failure to diagnose and promptly treat these conditions may delay healing and lead to scarring.

FRACTIONAL CO2 LASER RESURFACING

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS:

- Avoid direct sunlight and keep skin moist and cool to aid healing.
- Avoid environmental irritants during healing process (eg, 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 (eg, 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 (eg, Acetaminophen or Ibuprofen) for discomfort.

FIRST NIGHT:

- Sleep with head slightly elevated.
- Place paper towel over pillow to protect from ointment/cream.
- If experiencing irritation to the eye, may use an eye lubricant (eg, Systane™).

DAY 1 (FIRST DAY AFTER TREATMENT):

- Avoid direct sunlight and excessive heat.
- Begin washing face 2-3 times a day with room temperature water and Cetaphil.
- May take shower and wash hair. Avoid hot water.
- Re-apply Aquaphor to treated area. Ensure skin remains constantly moist.

DAY 2:

- Swelling should subside and skin may bronze and feel gritty.
- Itching (particularly along the jaw line) 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 regular skin care program as long as 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 our offices at
(805) 527-3711**

Or

email us at info@alamohillslaser.com