



## Pre & Post Treatment Instructions CO2 Laser Skin Resurfacing

### **Pre-Treatment**

Take pre-treatment medications as directed by the doctor.  
Avoid sun exposure and tanning at least for 2 weeks before.  
Be prepared for 3 to 7 days of typical down time.

### **Here is a list of things you will need:**

Aquaphor Healing Ointment  
Cetaphil Gentle Face Wash  
CeraVe Face Moisturizer (for use after the Aquaphor is no longer needed)  
White Vinegar  
Square Gauze Pads for Vinegar Soaks  
Optional: Tylenol, Benadryl, Ice packs

**Home care is very important after your CO2 Treatment.**

**Please follow the instructions below:**

### **TREATMENT DAY**

Post treatment discomfort is typically minimal, but if the area is uncomfortable, over-the-counter pain relievers such as acetaminophen (regular or extra strength Tylenol) and Benadryl (for swelling and itching) may be used. Usually, it feels like a sunburn at first, and then becomes tight and dry. You should avoid ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), naproxen (Aleve), and aspirin for 24 hours after the procedure.

Swelling is typically a short-term response. Use of a cold compress or ice packs will help to relieve the swelling. Swelling is typically worst when you first wake up in the morning especially around the eyes and mouth.

Sleep with your head elevated on pillows above the level of your heart.

If an antiviral was prescribed for you, continue to take as directed.

Be sure treated areas are completely covered in Aquaphor at all times.

### **POST TREATMENT DAYS 1-3**

#### **Cleanse**

Always wash your hands before touching your face.

Gently cleanse the skin 3 times a day with plain, lukewarm water and a gentle cleanser (such as Cetaphil Gentle Cleanser) beginning the morning after the treatment. If the gentle cleanser is not adequately removing the ointment when you wash your face, you may cleanse with a solution of vinegar and water (1 teaspoon of white vinegar per 1 cup of water). Sponge or spray this mixture on the area and rinse off gently.

### **Soak**

White vinegar soaks are very cleansing and soothing. Mix 1 teaspoon of white vinegar mixed with 1 cup of water for your vinegar soak solution. Do not use more vinegar, as the level of acidity is important. If you have burning, you may use less than a teaspoon of vinegar with 1 cup of water. Soak the gauze in the vinegar solution for 5-15 minutes then apply the gauge to the face. These soaks help with the pain, dissolve some of the residue and are anti-microbial which decreases infections. Soaks can be done every several hours. The soaks can be done at any time but may be more effective after your shower or after you wash your face and before reapplying the Aquaphor.

### **Moisturize**

After cleansing your face, **generously** apply Aquaphor Healing Ointment (creating an occlusive barrier) taking care to cover all treated areas. The occlusive barrier is needed to provide a protective layer that will hold moisture in the skin and provide protection to the skin from pollutants in the air as the skin heals.

Do not be alarmed if you experience “pin-point” bleeding, this is normal and appears worse than it is because the Aquaphor causes it to spread. Gently blot your face, **BUT DO NOT RUB YOUR SKIN UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.**

Reapply the Aquaphor, as needed. Do not allow the treated area to dry out.

### **Avoid**

No exercise, gym, or other strenuous activity for at least 4 days.

Avoid hot environments, saunas and swimming pools. You can shower but hot water/steam should be avoided. When showering, be sure to wash your hair behind you to avoid getting shampoo directly on the treated area.

Avoid “picking at” and aggressively scrubbing the skin – allow it to gently exfoliate with the washing process.

Avoid sleeping flat. Continue to sleep with your head elevated on pillows (head above heart) the first 2-3 nights to help minimize swelling.

Avoid direct sun exposure. Do NOT apply sunblock during the first 4 days of healing.

Wear a protective hat for the first 2 weeks while outdoors.

Avoid dirty, dusty environments, perfumes and hairsprays on treated areas.

## **POST TREATMENT DAYS 4-7**

### **Healing**

Each client falls into a spectrum of swelling and redness over the next 5-7 days. You may experience a mild sunburn like effect, while others may have significant swelling, redness, and itching – depending on your skin type. Grid marks on the face are a result of the laser fractionation and also resolve over 5-7 days.

Continue to cleanse the treated area with Cetaphil Gentle Face Wash for 7 days. DO NOT SCRATCH, PICK OR RUB THE SKIN VIGOROUSLY.

On day 4, you may stop using the Aquaphor and allow your skin to breathe. You may change to a bland, fragrance free moisturizer lotion or cream once the skin is no longer sensitive, oozing, or raw. We recommend CeraVe Face Moisturizer.

DO NOT apply makeup to the treated area until your skin has been reevaluated by the physician. DO NOT put any other creams or lotions on the skin except for the CeraVe Face Moisturizer. Stay out of the sun. Do not use sunscreen or other moisturizers. Be careful with hair products (shampoo, hair spray, etc.) and perfumes, so they do not touch the treated area.

### **Post laser Skin Pinkness**

Pinkness is the most common complaint of post laser patients. Pinkness is a normal healing process and is a sign of newly formed skin. Pinkness is extremely variable and can last several weeks in some patients and several months in other patients. A general rule is that the longer the pinkness, the better the result as more collagen is being formed. When pinkness is extreme or longer lasting than expected it can be a sign of over aggressive scrubbing or rubbing, or a sign of some irritating substance being applied. This is new sensitive skin so you need to be very careful about what you apply to your face.

### **AFTER WEEK 1**

After the first week you can resume most activities other than SUN EXPOSURE. DO NOT undergo waxing, micro-dermabrasion, exfoliations or light peels over the area for 3 months from the day of treatment.

Avoid sun exposure or tanning for at least 4 weeks after treatment. Once your skin has healed and you have followed up with doctor and been given the go ahead, you may begin to wear makeup. If you are able to wear makeup, mineral makeup is the best choice. In addition, a sunblock should be worn on a daily basis to help prevent any discoloration issues that could occur from both in-direct and direct sunlight.

Call our office if you have any signs of infection.