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## **FRACTIONAL CO<sub>2</sub> LASER PROCEDURE POST-OPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS**

### **Treatment Day:**

- Some discomfort/throbbing is expected for the first few hours/days. Swelling is also expected, which is worse in the morning and improves as you sit up. Cold compresses applied for 15 minutes every hour will help relieve the swelling. Rest and sleep with 2-3 pillows for the first few days.
- 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. Avoid ibuprofen (Motrin/Advil), naproxen (Aleve), and aspirin for 24 hours after the procedure.
- Take your antiviral medication as directed.
- Treated areas should be covered with Aquaphor or Vaseline at all times.
- Please contact us if you have excessive discomfort, bleeding, or swelling.

### **Post Treatment Days 1-3:**

- Gently cleanse your skin 2x/day with plain, lukewarm water and a gentle cleanser (such as Cetaphil Gentle Cleanser). Always wash your hands before touching your face.
- Vinegar soaks (1 tsp of white vinegar in 1 cup of water) or plain milk soaks may be used 2x/day.
- Moisturize **generously** with Aquaphor or Vaseline to cover all treated areas to protect the skin as it heals.
- Do not be alarmed if you experience pinpoint bleeding.
- Please avoid the following:
  - Exercise, gym, or strenuous activity for 3 days
  - Hot environments, saunas, swimming pools
  - Picking or aggressively rubbing the skin
  - Direct sun exposure. Wear a hat while outdoors for 2 weeks.

### **Post Treatment Days 4-7:**

- You may still have swelling/redness/itching or a mild sunburn effect.
- Continue to cleanse the treated areas with a gentle skin cleanser.
- Instead of Aquaphor or Vaseline, you may use a bland, fragrance-free moisturizer once the skin is no longer sensitive or raw.
- Do not apply makeup to the treated areas until your skin is completely healed.

### **After Week 1:**

- Pinkness is part of the normal healing process and may last several months.
- Avoid sun exposure/tanning for at least 4 weeks after treatment. Use sunblock on a daily basis. Sun exposure may cause permanent changes in skin pigmentation.
- Avoid waxing, microdermabrasion, or peels on the treated areas for 3 months.