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CO2 Laser Skin Treatment After Care Instructions

There are four essential components of skin care after CO2 laser treatments

1. The skin must be kept moist with topical cream or ointment – skin heals best when moist.
2. The skin must be kept clean – this will help with oozing & peeling skin.
3. Sun block and sun protection is essential for the new skin. Avoid direct sun exposure for 6 weeks.
4. Continue taking any antivirals (i.e. Valtrex, Zovirax, Famvir) prescribed for you before treatment.

General Expectations & Instructions

- Your skin will be red, swollen, blistered, and oozing for several days, then will turn darker as it begins to peel. It is normal for the skin to feel “sun-burned” and tight. It will be red for a few weeks.
- Skin will usually start peeling on day 3 or 4. Do not pick at skin - let it peel off on its own.
- Take Ibuprofen or Tylenol as needed. Follow instructions on the bottle.
- If you experience itching, you may use an over-the-counter oral antihistamine such as Benadryl.
- ***If you experience increased pain, drainage, severe redness or fever, increased itching, or cold sores please call our office right away.***
- You can take a shower, but do not let shampoo or hair products get on your face.
- Sleep with your head elevated 45 degrees or with 2 pillows will help alleviate swelling.
- Change your pillow case every night or use a clean towel or lined pad over the pillowcase.
- Use an umbrella when walking outdoors to protect from direct sun exposure.
- Cleansing must be gentle, as you do not want to remove new skin cells that are forming.
- Stay hydrated by drinking water daily. Water helps with the recovery process.
- The **SOAK SOLUTION** keeps the skin moist but also loosens and removes dead skin cells and keeps the skin clean. Make the **SOAK SOLUTION** by mixing **1 teaspoon of plain white vinegar with 2 cups water** (This solution may be mixed ahead of time and kept in the refrigerator.) Using a clean soft cloth or gauze apply the soak solution to the treated area with a wiping motion. Re-apply the Aquaphor, Recovery Balm or Vaseline to the treated area after soaking. If your skin is dry you may use the soak solution more often than recommended below.

Skin Care Routine after procedure (Day 1 is the day of the procedure)

Day 1 to Day 5: While your skin is healing, follow this regimen 3 times per day:

1. Wash your hands prior to touching your face.
2. Wash face with Cetaphil Daily Cleanser, Cerave Cleanser, Gentle Cleanser or Soak Solution. Gently pat dry.
3. Apply Soak Solution (if it was not used as a cleanser). Dip clean soft cloth or soft gauze into solution and apply to the treated area with a gentle wiping motion.
4. Apply Nectar or PLUMP (optional: these products may enhance the recovery process).
5. Apply a thick layer of Aquaphor, Vaseline or Recovery Balm to the treated area 3 times a day or more if needed to keep your skin flexible. Skin should be moist at all times and appear shiny from product.

Day 6 to Day 14: When peeling is complete and new skin is formed, follow this regimen 2-3 times per day:

1. Wash your hands prior to touching your face.
2. Wash face with Cetaphil Daily Cleanser, Cerave Cleanser, or Gentle Cleanser. Gently pat dry.
3. Apply Nectar or PLUMP (optional: these products may enhance the recovery process).
4. Apply Cetaphil Moisturizer, Cerave Moisturizer or RECOVER to the treated area 3 times a day or more if needed to keep your skin flexible and feeling hydrated.
5. Wear a broad spectrum (UVA/UVB) sunscreen with a SPF 30 or higher after peeling has resolved to maintain results and help prevent abnormal pigmentation (darker skin.)
6. After the skin is healed and all of the scabs/crusts are gone, a good skin care regimen is recommended. Using a mild or gentle cleanser will help maintain and improve the results of this procedure. Other products are too strong for immediate healing phase. Only use products recommended by your physician for the first 6 weeks.