

AcuPulse CO2 Laser Care Instructions

Starting three weeks before treatment day, avoid extreme sun exposure. Use sunblock (SPF 30+) when outside.

Before Treatment Day

Have the following items ready for use after your treatment:

- **Pharmacy.** Be sure accurate pharmacy information is given.
- **Medications/supplements**
 - If lips/mouth are being treated, start taking Acyclovir/Valtrex as prescribed 2 days prior, and continue as directed.
 - You need to stop taking Aspirin or other pain medication such as Motrin, Celebrex, Aleve, and Ibuprofen, 7 days before your procedure. You may take Tylenol (acetaminophen for discomfort).
 - Antihistamines (Claritin, Zyrtec, Allegra, Benadryl) are helpful for itching.
 - Arnica. Start taking Arnica the day before the procedure to help reduce swelling and healing time.
- **Hair bands or ties.** Keep hair off your face and neck. They should be soft and not too tight as you may need to keep them on for 48 hours.
- **Home Environment.** Your recovery room needs to be free from direct sunlight. Blinds and drapes are sufficient. Do not allow pets to interact with the treatment area.
- **Aquaphor.** You will be supplied with ointment after your treatment; however, please have extra on hand.
- **Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream.** This is the recommended moisturizer to use after your provider clears you to use (typically 7 days after treatment).
- **Ice.** Bags of frozen peas work well as ice packs.
- **Prepare your post-care soaks:** Place a large pitcher of water in the fridge prior to coming in for your treatment. Stock clean, soft wash clothes for soaks.
- **Post care cleanser.** Be sure to stock a gentle cleanser like Cetaphil or Neutrogena (without salicylic acid) to use for cleansing post laser.
- **Transportation.** Please arrange someone to drive you from your appointment.
- **Follow up appointments.** Please be sure to have your follow up appointment booked prior to the day of your treatment.

Evening Before Treatment

Shower with soap and shampoo to cleanse the skin and hair. Pay special attention to the area of which your procedure will be. Avoid using hair care products (gels, hairspray etc.) Do not apply any lotion. Be sure all hair is removed from the treatment area.

Day of Treatment

- Do not wear makeup, hair sprays or gels.
- Apply topical numbing cream as prescribed 90 minutes before your appointment starts. Apply a similar amount as you would apply sunscreen. Be sure to verify with your provider which areas you will be treating.
- If treating around the eye area, apply numbing cream close to the orbital rim and below the brow bone.

After Treatment

Congratulations! You are on your way toward more healthy and radiant looking skin by having AcuPulse Laser Treatment. Now it is important to help your skin heal quickly and protect your skin investment.

Precautions

- Avoid contact of the treatment area with clothing to minimize the risk of abrasion.
- Patients should not “pick at” or aggressively scrub the skin. Allow the skin to gently exfoliate during the washing process.
- Sleep on your back for the first few nights to avoid having the repaired skin contact your pillow or sheets.
- After two weeks you may increase your exercise/activity as tolerated. Start slow then progress to normal activity, but let your body tell you when you are ready for vigorous exercise. Avoid any activities that cause significant pain or discomfort. Exercise will increase blood flow to your face and will increase pressure, thus leading to more flushing and swelling.
- Minimize sun exposure by wearing a wide brim hat if you are going to be in the sun until your skin has healed.
- Wash your hands every time before you touch the treated area.
- Take antihistamines (Claritin, Zyrtec, Allegra, Benadryl) for itching.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO NEVER LET YOUR SKIN GET DRY!

- Apply healing ointment like Aquaphor, Vaseline or Alba to all treated areas multiple times a day. It is important that your skin stays moist at all times. The use of occlusive ointment improves your comfort, and reduces the sensation of pain and burning by preventing air from contacting the treated region.

Cleaning

- Starting the day after your treatment you may wash your face once to twice a day. Gently wash the treated area with lukewarm water, mild soap and water (i.e. Cetaphil or Neutrogena). Avoid vigorous scrubbing or firm pressure.
- Refrain from applying creams or makeup to treated areas until cleared to do so. Typically, patients can start using makeup after 10-14 days.
- It is okay to shower but do not let your shampoo or hair products get on your face. Reapply Aquaphor/Vaseline/Alba afterward.

Appearance

- **Swelling:** Swelling occurs in everyone after this procedure but varies from person to person. You will notice it will continue to increase for the first 2-3 days and slowly begin to fade 7-21 days post treatment. It is normal for the skin to feel sunburned and/or tight.
- **Redness:** your skin will go through color changes during the healing process. Ranging initially from dark to light red immediately after the laser, then it will start to lighten as it is healing.
- **Sloughing:** The skin will usually begin to slough on day 3 or 4. Do not pick the skin.

Cold Compresses

- Immediately after treatment you may begin using cold compresses to help cool the hot sensation and reduce swelling.
- Fill a bowl with tap water and ice cubes. Soak a clean washcloth in the cold water. Lay the wash cloth on the face. Remove once no longer cold. Reapply healing ointment after each round of soaks.
- Ideally use cold compresses at least 2-3 times every 2 hours for the first two days. You may continue using cold compresses after the first two days if it feels good. Discomfort varies. Most report a heat sensation for the first day or two after treatment. Cold compresses can calm this sensation.

Miscellaneous Instructions and Long-Term Care

- You may use Tylenol to prevent discomfort.
- After being cleared by your provider (typically 1 week), you can stop using ointment and switch to a bland moisturizer, such as Cetaphil Moisturizing Cream.
- Itching is a common sensation during healing. This mild to moderate itching is associated with skin re-growth and healing skin. Cold compresses may help dull this sensation or use of over the counter hydrocortisone 1% cream applied twice a day, no more than three days if needed.
- Sunblock is extremely important after this treatment. It is recommended to wear SPF 30 or higher.
- Retinoids are safe to use starting 6-8 weeks after the procedure; begin twice weekly, then increase frequency as tolerated.
- Avoid spray-on tans and hair dyes (including brow tints) while dots are still present from the laser, as the dye will make the dots more visible.

Questions/Concerns. Post-treatment healing varies from patient to patient. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our office at 425-450-0880.