

Scott P. Bartlett, M.D.
Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

Pre-Treatment Conditioning Program

It is advisable before any laser treatment to condition the skin with a program of products, following a plan with a definite goal in mind. These products are medically necessary to aid in the correction and restoration of the skin for a healthier and younger-looking appearance.

Pre-Operative and Pre-Procedure Skin Preparation MAY include:

1. Retin-A cream: applied once a day, beginning at least 4 weeks prior to laser treatment. Discontinue use 1 week prior to lasering. This cream helps prepare the skin by causing the upper, dead layers of the skin to peel and flake off. It also aids with healing after the laser treatment.
2. Hydroquinone: applied twice a day beginning 4 weeks prior to laser treatment. Continue up until the procedure. This stops the production of pigment in the skin to lessen the potential for post inflammatory hyperpigmentation.
3. Anti-viral medication: If you have ever experienced cold sores please let the doctor know. Zovirax 400mg, 3 times a day, beginning 2 days prior to treatment and continuing 5 days following the procedure. If herpetic outbreaks still occur, please let us know so we can increase the dose to 800mg 5 x a day and application of Zovirax 5 % ointment every 3 hours for 7 days may also be necessary.
4. Acne-prone patients: You should be treated by our aesthetician until the skin is stable. You must be off Accutane for 6-12 months prior to the procedure.
5. You may use as much moisturizer as you wish prior to the procedure, and we encourage you to use Sunblock.

If your skin is exfoliating due to some of the above treatments do **NOT** assist it – do not rub or peel the skin off. When washing your skin in the morning and evening, expect some of the skin to fall off. Your skin's appearance will begin to improve slowly, so be patient. The most sensitive areas are the eyelids and nasolabial folds. If you are uncomfortable in these areas, slow down and use more moisturizers.

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Pre-Laser Instructions – Day of Treatment

1. Arrange for someone to drive you to the office or hospital. We will prescribe a tranquilizer, such as Valium, to be taken one hour prior to treatment if your procedure is in the office, if you so desire.
2. No make-up. Do not apply cream to your face. Men should shave closely.
3. If your procedure is being done in the office, eat a light meal before you arrive.

Post-Operative Instructions

You may wash with an antibacterial soap (such as Dial) and warm water twice a day. After washing and drying you must apply **Aquaphor** by Eucerin (any drug store will carry it). The Aquaphor must be on at all times to help heal and moisten your skin and prevent scarring.

If any crusting or scabbing forms, this is to be expected; do not pick - you may use 1 teaspoon white vinegar and 1 cup warm water to help soak them off. The crusting should dissipate around 10-12 days. You may have a little pin-point bleeding the first week after soaks. Crusting usually dissipates in 10-12 days. The skin may remain red or pink for 2-3 months and occasionally as long as 6 months. You may apply make-up as directed, usually about the 8th-10th day. Check with the nurse or physician.

Swelling may be severe the first few days. **Do not lie flat.** Sleep with your head elevated on several pillows the first few days or elevated in a recliner. Remain indoors away from the sun and wind as much as possible the first few days. If the area around the mouth has been lasered, you should keep talking to a minimum and eat soft foods for a week. It is not unusual for the eyes to be swollen shut for a few days. Intermittent ice compresses may decrease swelling and relieve discomfort for the *first* 24-48 hours. When eyelids are treated, expect vision to be blurry the first 3-6 days. This is due to the increased mucous production and the ointment you are applying around your eyes.

There may be oozing of clear fluid for 3-7 days. Pat the areas gently with a clean cloth or gauze and continue applying Aquaphor to the areas.

If milia (tiny white bumps) appear on your skin, observe for 48 hours, and if no improvement, call the office. Usually these disappear on their own.

Usually there is little pain, but there may be a slight burning sensation or a flushed feeling in the treated areas. Tylenol Extra Strength should give some relief of discomfort. Continue taking all oral meds prescribed preoperatively (i.e. anti-viral and antibiotic).

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Notify the office Immediately if any of the following occur:

- Fever of 101 or greater; chills
- Cold sore breakouts occur on or around the sites lasered
- Severe swelling

After 7-10 days, you may begin to apply Hydrocortisone 2.5% twice a day for 5-7 days. Then stop Hydrocortisone and start applying Hydroquinone, once or twice a day depending on you skin type, for 1 month. After the HC and the HQ, be sure to apply Sunblock and a good rich moisturizer daily.

Have a positive attitude... you will heal better. RELAX!!!

Post-Operative Skin Care

A good moisturizer will be needed under makeup, as skin is dry and tight at first. When completely healed with no further crusting, men may resume shaving.

Avoid strenuous exercise for 2 weeks to avoid irritating the skin.

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO AVOID DIRECT SUN EXPOSURE. The treated skin will be overly sensitive to the sun. Laser-treated areas should not be exposed directly for at least 4 weeks after treatment. Normal outings in the sun are okay after healing as long as a good Sunblock is applied; about the 10th day after healing your skin should be able to tolerate sunscreen (SPF30-SPF50, we do NOT recommend an SPF under 30). If the eye area was lasered, be sure to use sunglasses with UVA and UVB 100% filters. You may feel a sensation of excessive tightness during the third through eighth week postoperatively. There will be flakiness from time to time over the next several weeks. **Do not pick or rub.**

Please call with any further questions or concerns. We look forward to helping you in any way we can.