

Laser Skin Resurfacing

Sciton® Erbium Laser

Treatment Instructions

Preoperative instructions for laser skin resurfacing

Shopping List

- Prescriptions:** Anti-viral medication, pain medicine, antibiotic, antinausea medicine
- Alastin:** will be given to you at your preop appointment
- Headband/Hair ties:** to keep hair away from treated areas.
- Cotton balls:** to softly cleanse the face following treatment.
- Fresh Pillowcases:** pillowcases will get dirty from the topical products that you will use as you recover.

Two weeks before procedure

- **Pre-op Appointment:** You will come in for your preop appointment where you will review the procedure plan with your surgeon and go over logistical details with your patient coordinator. You can ask any questions you have regarding the procedure at the time of your appointment.
- **Diet/ Supplement restrictions:** Avoid foods, drinks and herbal supplements that can increase the risk of bleeding and bruising. Avoid Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen, Motrin, Blood thinners, Vitamin E, Omega-3, Fish oils and alcohol. Use Tylenol in place of other over the counter pain medications.
- **Fill prescriptions:** These may include an antibiotic, pain medication, mild sedative, anti-viral medication and Alastin for after the procedure. Make sure you understand how and when to take all medications. We suggest keeping a notepad to keep track of the medications you have taken.
- **Hair Removal:** Avoid electrolysis/waxing/hair removal creams in area you are desiring skin resurfacing for two weeks prior to your procedure.

- **Skin care products:** Stop alpha-hydroxy acids (glycolic acid), beta-hydroxy acids (salicylic acid) and benzoyl peroxide and any other exfoliating products that may be drying and/or irritating 2 weeks prior to your procedure.

One week before procedure

- **Review instructions with Caregiver:** Confirm who will be driving you to and from the surgical center and who will stay with you for at least 24 hours after the skin resurfacing procedure.
- **Arnica:** If provided, start your arnica tablets as directed before your surgery.

Three days before procedure

- **Cold sores:** Start antiviral medication that was provided for full face laser resurfacing patients, or patients with a history of cold sores.
- **Topical skin treatments:** Stop using Retin-A, Hydroquinone, Retinols, Renova, Differin for three days prior to treatment.

Day before procedure

- **Antibiotic:** Take your antibiotic 24 hours prior to the procedure
- **Set up a home recovery area:** This may include pillows, blankets, books, television, and anything else to assist with a comfortable recovery.
- **Bathing:** You can shower but do not apply lotion, perfume, hair products, etc.
- **Relax:** Stay calm and get plenty of rest to avoid unnecessary stress.

Day of procedure

- **Dress comfortably:** Do not wear nice clothing. Dress in comfortable, low neck and loose-fitting clothes. Shirts that can be buttoned or zipped up are preferred.
- **Wash your face:** Wash face prior to procedure. **Do NOT apply anything to your face after cleansing** this includes lotion, sunscreen, makeup, etc.
- **Valium:** Take Valium 30 minutes before you arrive at the office.
- **Arrival to office:** Someone will need to drive you to and from the procedure (you cannot take a taxicab or Uber). Bring the remaining valium and pain medicine with you to the office.

Day of and Day After Procedure

- **Sleep:** Sleep on your back with your head elevated about 30-40 degrees (2-3 pillows). Do not sleep on your side. Keeping your body more upright will limit swelling. You do not want the laser treated area to be pressing against the pillow. Continue this for one week.
- **Alastin ointment:** After treatment, we will apply Alastin to the skin. Make sure to keep your face is always covered with a thick layer of Alastin.

- **Reapplying Alastin:** On the morning after your procedure, you may gently wipe off the Alastin ointment with a moist cotton ball and immediately reapply Alastin. Do NOT scrub off any skin crusts. Apply this ointment 4 times a day.

Medications

- **Pain:** You will be prescribed a pain medication for post-operative pain control. If your discomfort after surgery is not strong, you are welcome to take Tylenol in place of the prescribed medication. Do NOT combine the prescribed medication with Tylenol. Often the medication that is prescribed to you will have Tylenol in it and combining it with more Tylenol could cause an overdose. **Do not exceed 4,000 mg of Tylenol in any 24-hour period.** Take medications with food to minimize the risk of nausea.
- **Nausea:** A common side effect after general anesthesia and strong medications. If you are experiencing nausea, we advise that you take your nausea medication.
- **Constipation:** It is quite common to experience constipation when taking narcotic pain medications or after having general anesthesia. MiraLax or other over the counter laxatives are recommended. Also beginning a regimen of Metamucil or other fiber supplement is also advisable. Do not wait until you are constipated.
- **Medications to avoid:** You will find a list of medications to avoid in this packet. In general, you should avoid anything that is known to thin the blood (such as aspirin or NSAIDs) or interact with anesthesia. A full and comprehensive list of medications to avoid prior to surgery is included in this packet. In general, these should be stopped 2-6 weeks prior to surgery, but if you have any specific questions, bring these up ahead of surgery with plenty of time to allow you to come off the medication.

Nutrition

- **Diet:** A light, low fat diet is best after surgery. You may start a regular diet the day after surgery if you are not feeling nauseous or vomiting. Start with liquids for the first few hours after surgery and then slowly advance to more solid foods.
- **Hydration:** Stay hydrated by drinking 8-10 glasses of water a day. Avoid alcohol for 48 hours after surgery and do not combine with pain medications.

Activity

- **Sun exposure:** Strict sun avoidance for the first eight weeks following treatment is imperative. **YOU WILL BURN AND HYPERPIGMENT IF YOU HAVE DIRECT SUN EXPOSURE.** If you must go outside, wear a wide brimmed hat, sunglasses and stay in the shade.

- **Return to work:** Most patients require 10-14 days off work depending on their job responsibilities and face-to-face interactions. You will likely still have some resolving redness as you re-enter the workplace. You can cover this most of the time with makeup.
- **Driving:** Do not operate a vehicle or make important decisions until you have been off pain medications for 24 hours. Use good judgment.
- **Exercise:** Light physical activity may be resumed 2-3 weeks after the procedure. Remember to start easy and build up to your previous exercise levels. Just know that swelling may transiently be worse with exercise.
- **Heat:** Saunas, hot showers, and hot tubs should be avoided for 2 weeks. These activities may further irritate the skin and delay proper healing. It will also cause an unnecessary increase in your pain.
- **Cool compresses:** Cool compresses with a damp soft cloth for 10-20 minutes at a time may relieve temporary discomfort.

Bathing and showering

- **Showering:** You may shower and wash your hair. Try to avoid getting soap or shampoo on your healing face as this may contain chemicals that irritate your skin. Make sure you apply Alastin after you get out.
- **Wash your face:** Skin should be washed 4-6 times a day with cool tap water and soft cotton balls for the first week following the procedure. **DO NOT USE ANY CLEANSERS, SOAPS OR TONERS.** You may add a tablespoon of white vinegar to a pint of water and use it to wash. This can help break up the grease film on your skin. After you have cleansed, apply a thick layer of Alastin.
- **Essential recovery kit:** At your one-week follow-up appointment, you will be given a skin repair kit containing skin products to use until they are gone. Once you have used up these items, you will be recommended a maintenance program for your skin to prevent further aging and to continue to improve the quality of your skin.

What to Expect

- **Bruising:** You can expect to have some bruising. Most bruises will resolve in about 2-3 weeks. The bruise will go from a purplish color to a yellow/green shade as it starts to resolve.
- **Swelling:** Swelling of the face and eyes is quite common, and typically begins to reduce by the third day after treatment and may improve with intermittent rest. Physical activity can transiently increase swelling.
- **Pinpoint bleeding:** Pinpoint bleeding may occur but will stop after the first 24 hours.
- **Itching:** Itching at the laser-treated areas is normal for the first few weeks. Good moisturizer will help with this, and you also may take Benadryl to help with this.
- **Oozing:** Oozing is common and generally looks like yellowish drips on the skin. Blot these areas gently with a soft tissue and re-apply Alastin ointment as needed.

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- **Discomfort:** It is normal to experience tightness, soreness, and fatigue for several days to weeks following your procedure as your skin recovers.
- **Burning:** Burning, hotness, redness, warmth, and a sunburned sensation are normal and anticipated following your resurfacing procedure.

Do Nots

- **Do NOT pick any crust of pus that may form on the face.** This may cause permanent scarring of the area.
- **Do NOT soak in baths, Jacuzzis or hot tubs** until the skin has fully healed.
- **Do NOT take Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Naproxen or other blood thinners** until your physician advises you that it is safe.
- **Do NOT expose your skin to the sun for 8 weeks.** Use a wide brim hat, sunscreen, and sunglasses every time you are out in the sun. Avoid direct sunlight and try to be in the shade if you must be outside.

Emergency Situations

*****When to call the office or go to the emergency room*****

- **Signs of infection:** Spreading redness, worsening swelling, increased drainage, or drainage of pus, worsening pain, warmth at the incision site and temperature above 101.5°F
- **Excessive bleeding:** If the dressings are saturated with bright red blood and you are having to make frequent dressing changes.
- **Other emergency situations:** Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chest pain, lightheadedness that does not quickly resolve, severe vomiting, pain, or asymmetric swelling of your legs.

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