

LASER RESURFACING INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE SURGERY

**** Avoid Aspirin containing products for one week before surgery (only Tylenol is permitted)**

**** Start taking cold sore prescription the day before surgery**

SUPPLIES: New large container of Vaseline.

DAY OF SURGERY

1. Before you come in eat a normal meal. It will be awkward to eat and drink for a few hours after surgery.
2. Bring with you to the office:
 - Prescriptions – have your prescriptions filled and bring **all** of them with you. You will start your medications in the office immediately before surgery.
 - Valtrex prescriptions should be started the day before surgery.
 - Wear an old, loose, button down shirt – or bring one with you.

**** RELAX and ENJOY the experience! ****

AFTER SURGERY

Leaving the office you will be swollen and covered with Vaseline. You will experience weeping of the area immediately. You will receive Extra Strength TYLENOL as you leave. When you get home, you will need to start the showering routine as described in “General Care” and continue taking your Tylenol as directed. Reapply the Vaseline to the lasered area often. Read all the instructions carefully. If you have any questions call the office; if after hours call Dr. Rotter’s pager.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- WEEPING:** Expect the treated areas to weep a clear, slightly sticky fluid that dries as a golden crust. This will continue until all of the new skin forms, usually 3 – 7 days.
- SWELLING:** You will be swollen after surgery. The swelling peaks on the third day. It will be most pronounced upon awakening. The swelling will resolve in the first week. It is helpful to sleep with your head elevated – try not to lie flat for the first few days.
- PAIN:** You should have minimal discomfort. The treated areas may “burn” or “sting” for the first day or two. Tylenol or another non-prescription pain reliever should be all that you need. Use as directed on the bottle. If stronger medication is needed, call Dr. Rotter.
- CRUSTING:** If crusting occurs get in the shower. Always let the water hit your head and run down onto the resurfaced area. After showering, immediately reapply Vaseline.
- EXERCISE:** Avoid strenuous activity for one week. Try to avoid perspiring.

GENERAL CARE

VASELINE: Start with a NEW large jar of Vaseline Petroleum Jelly. Vaseline should cover the entire lasered area continually. Showering is the only time the lasered area will not be covered with Vaseline. Your face will be extremely greasy. (diluted dishwashing soap will help lift the grease from your hair- use it prior to shampooing)

SHOWERING: You will need to shower for 10 minutes of every waking hour for the first 5 days. You may get in the shower as long as you have tepid water flowing over the lasered areas. Always keep the water pressure low and the water temperature tepid. When in the shower allow the water to hit the top of your head and flow over the lasered area. Remain in the shower long enough so that the water penetrates the Vaseline and gets onto your skin. Some Vaseline may need to be dabbed off (be careful not to rub or scratch your face). At night just use the water whenever you awaken, there is no need to get up every hour. Whenever you are not in the water you must keep plentiful amounts of Vaseline on the lasered area at all times.

INTERMEDIATE: Usually around day ten, Dr. Rotter will switch you over to a fragrance-free moisturizer (e.g., Eucerine, Cetaphil cream). It should not contain any medications (e.g. alpha-hydroxy acids or retinoids). Use the moisturizer constantly for the next two weeks.

COSMETIC USE: Dr. Rotter will let you know when you may use cosmetics, usually after ten days to two weeks. You may use make-up to cover the new pink skin – use a yellow concealer under your foundation to neutralize the redness. The pinkness will diminish and gradually fade away over the next 1-3 months. Whenever you go outside after the first two weeks your skin must be covered with adequate sun block (at least an SPF 30 – reapplied every hour you are in the sun).

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

INFECTION: Infections are possible but uncommon. Notify Dr. Rotter if you develop a high fever or have a significant increase in pain or experience cloudy drainage.

ITCHING: Itching may start between day 5 and day 10. It may continue for about a week. This is normal, skin repairing itself may itch. You will need to use a steroid to prevent yourself from scratching your new skin especially during sleep. Trim your fingernails. After washing your face, apply the steroid cream, wait 10 –15 minutes then reapply Vaseline or moisturizer (whichever one you are using at the time).

PIGMENTATION: Expect the initial reaction of your skin to be pinkness. This color may be splotchy and persist for weeks to months. You may conceal this color with concealer makeup as previously discussed. Some people – especially those who tan easily – will develop a darkening of the skin (hyperpigmentation). This post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation WILL FADE. Dr. Rotter often prescribes a bleaching cream for use before and after the laser procedure.

COLD SORES: The trauma of laser surgery can trigger a recurrence of a herpes labialis (cold sore) infection. Dr. Rotter pre-medicates patients with any past history of cold sores. The surgery does not cause outbreaks in people who do not already have the herpes simplex virus. If you develop pain, fever, or groups of blisters notify Dr. Rotter as soon as possible. If you were given a prescription take the full course as directed. Start taking the prescription the day before surgery.

****** Dr. Rotter strives to make your recovery as smooth and relaxing as possible. He will see you several times during the first two weeks. If you have any questions or concerns do not hesitate to call the office. A two-minute visit can alleviate a lot of anxiety. *******

Dr. Rotter's Pager # for emergencies is 301-807-8807