

## Fractional CO2 Laser Before and After Procedure Instructions

Fractional CO2 Laser is a safe, effective procedure performed to restore balance, proportion and a younger appearance. As with all facial plastic surgery, a thorough health assessment and realistic expectation are pre-requisites. Your understanding of instructions and routines is essential to a successful final result.

As a person ages, their collagen production begins to decline which leads to the breakdown of the skin's underlying support structure. Daily exposure to UV rays other environmental elements, and genetics can cause the skin to become discolored and premature wrinkles may emerge. Treatments with the Fractional CO2 laser provide wrinkle reduction, overall tissue tightening and textural improvement. The skin will have a smoother, tighter appearance and pigmentation will be diminished.

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### Before Surgery

At your pre-operative appointment, our nurse will provide all the instructions for you to follow before and after surgery. We will call the day before to confirm your time to arrive for surgery. The Fractional CO2 Laser procedure takes about 1-2 hours depending on the structure and amount of tissue prior to surgery. Recovery time takes about an hour and we will call your ride about half an hour before you are ready to go.

### Pre-Operative Instructions

1. Please avoid any aspirin, aspirin-containing products or ibuprofen (Advil, Aleve, Motrin, etc.) for 1-2 weeks prior to and 2 weeks following your surgery. See our "Medication List" for products to avoid prior to surgery. If you are on any medications that affect bleeding (Coumadin/Plavix) please notify the office immediately.
2. Please refrain from tobacco products and alcohol for 2 weeks prior and 1 week following surgery. Delayed wound healing, persistent skin redness and other complications may persist when tobacco and alcohol are not discontinued.
3. Please notify us of all routine medications and your health history and if you have or are taking Accutane within the past 12-18 months. We ask that you remain on your daily medications unless instructed otherwise. At the pre-operative appointment, our nurse will tell you which daily medications to take the morning of surgery.
4. At your pre-operative appointment, you will be given prescriptions for use before and after surgery including an oral antibiotic and pain medications. Please obtain the prescriptions before your surgery and bring them with you the day of the procedure.
5. We will ask you to take Arnica 10-14 days before and 7 days after surgery; a natural herb that significantly decreases bruising, follow directions on bottle. We will also ask you to take 1500 mg of vitamin C, which helps promote healing. You may also be asked to take an antibiotic the day of surgery.
6. Do not tan for 30 days prior to your treatment and avoid tanning all together during the entire treatment program.
7. Begin Valtrex 3 Days prior to your treatment.

### Day of Surgery

1. You may not eat or drink after midnight the evening before the surgery unless instructed otherwise.
2. You may brush your teeth.
3. Wear a zip-up or button up shirt and slip on shoes.
4. Wash face and hairline with antibacterial shampoo. Do not apply creams or make-up and **DO NOT USE HAIR STYLING PRODUCTS.**
5. It is not required that a family member or friend stay at the Centre during your surgery. However, we will need a number where they can be reached. Someone must to drive you home after your surgery and stay with you that evening. Transportation to the office the day following surgery is also required.

### After Surgery

As you become more aware after surgery you will notice that your skin may feel a bit tight because of swelling. Following your surgery the nurse will ask you to meet the discharge criteria: drink liquids, walk with a steady gait, void and manage your discomfort. The nurse will also go over all post-op instructions with the person caring for you. Assistance for the first 2 days is strongly recommended.

## Post-Operative Instructions

### Day after Surgery

1. You will be asked to come to our office the following your post-operative appointment.
2. Keep treatment area moist with Polysporin until you return to the office the next day.

### First 48 Hours

1. Place frozen peas, ice packs or ice water soaked pads on the area treated, except while sleeping, changing them every 20 minutes.
2. Keep head elevated at a 45 degree angle
3. Reduce activity to decrease any chance of bleeding swelling and nausea. You may get out of bed to use the bathroom. Swelling, bruising and discomfort are very normal symptoms after your surgery.
4. Take medications as directed
5. Call the office immediately if you experience swelling accompanied by excessive bruising and pain especially if it occurs on one side.

## Treatment Care

1. Cleanse with peroxide and gauze pads then shower using warm water to remove crusting 2-3 times daily if needed.
2. Keep area moist with Vaseline in am and antibiotic ointment at night for four days only.
3. Once peeling is complete you may return to washing with a gentle cleanser and using a light moisturizer and applying make-up.

## Medications

Most patients complain of discomfort more than pain. Use pain medication as directed or needed and taking with food helps minimize nausea associated with pain medications. DO NOT DRIVE OR DRINK ALCOHOL WHILE TAKING THE PAIN MEDICATION.

## Items to Purchase

Neosporin/Polysporin; Peroxide; Q-tips; 4x4 Gauze; Saline solution (for your eyes).

## Healing Care

1. Rest, both physically and mentally, and adequate nutrition are important factors in healing.
2. Numbness, tingling, swelling, itching, discoloration, bumpiness, hardness, crusting, tightness, and redness are normal and should go away with full healing.
3. Avoid sun exposure as much as possible for 3 months, as it can cause swelling or an uneven change in pigmentation. Wear a hat and sunscreen if you have to be out in the sun.
4. Following surgery, our staff will tell you when it is okay to apply sunscreen, cosmetics, or facial creams

\*Full healing takes 2-3 months.

## Diet

Advance your diet from liquids to soft foods such as, oatmeal or yogurt or soup to your regular diet as tolerated.

## Activity

Rest for the entire day of surgery. Sleep with the head of the bed elevated or use 2-3 pillows for one week after surgery. Absolutely no bending, lifting, or straining. If you have little children, bend at the knees or sit on the floor and let them climb on your lap. No driving for one week following surgery. Two weeks off work is recommended.

## Final Result

Following your Fractional CO2 Laser procedure it takes time for the swelling to subside and for the skin to heal. Most patients return to work in 2 weeks following surgery; however, 3 weeks is ideal, depending on the degree of privacy one is trying to maintain.