

Perioperative Instructions for Superficial Chemical Peels

Chemical peels correct sun damage, flatten mild scarring, reduce the appearance of fine wrinkles and diminish hyperpigmentation. Superficial peels do not alter the normal architecture of the skin, nor the ability of the skin to tan and return to the same color after peeling or sunlight. This information is provided to help ensure your comfort and safety. If you have any questions, please call our office in advance of your procedure for clarification.

Preoperative

1. Review your medical history, specifically your list of medications and herbal supplements, with Dr. Doolabh to determine which medications to discontinue or begin prior to your peel.
2. The four weeks prior to the peel, wash daily with antibacterial soap to decrease your chances of infection. In sequence, apply a small pea-sized amount of topical prescription Retin A 0.05%, prescription Hydroquinone 4%, over-the-counter sunblock SPF 15 or higher, to the area to be peeled in the morning. Apply each medication at one minute intervals to allow absorption. Apply the medications to the lower eyelash margin, and lip margins only to avoid irritation. If this should get into your eyes, wash immediately with large amounts of water. You may apply your regular makeup or moisturizer. Expect redness, itching and flaking of the pretreated skin and use over-the-counter Hydrocortisone 1% topical cream for comfort.
3. Use other sun protection clothing, glasses and other avoidance of sun exposure.

Day of Procedure

1. To reduce infection, do not wear makeup, lotions, or deodorant on the peel area.
2. Do not wear contact lenses to the office on the day of the peel. Bring a container for your glasses.

Postoperative week 1

1. You have been treated with chemicals that may cause your skin to break, swell, crust, turn brown and peel off over the coming week. Typically the skin turns dark the following day and peels without blistering over the next 3-5 days. Your activities should be restricted in order to minimize swelling and unfavorable scarring. Swelling may increase the first 48 hours before it starts to subside.
 - a. You may apply towel-padded ice packs over your dressing for comfort and to minimize swelling. Gauze moistened with iced saline or witch hazel is another alternative.
 - b. Wash with tap water and a mild soap twice daily starting the day after the peel
 - c. Apply a thin coat of Vaseline ointment to minimize itching and facilitate flaking as needed. Do not resume other skin care creams until the skin has returned to normal color, usually 5-7 days.
 - d. Do not pick at the peeled skin to avoid scarring. Initially after the skin flakes off, the underlying skin will be very pink.
 - e. Avoid the sun, wear protective clothing and eyewear, and continue use of a sunblock SPF 15 or higher as long as it does not sting when applied. This should become a continuous routine to maintain your results.
 - f. You may apply makeup over peeling skin as tolerated.
 - g. This procedure usually causes little if any pain. If you notice significant pain, swelling or fever blisters, notify Dr. Doolabh immediately.
2. Your first postoperative visit should be scheduled one week later. Subsequent peels of varying depth are prescribed based on the preliminary results and do require pretreatment as outlined above.