

Fractional Resurfacing Treatment Guidelines

Fractional Resurfacing is a safe, non-invasive procedure to treat wrinkles, scars, unwanted textural irregularities, and crow's feet. Optimal results may require multiple treatments.

Cold Sores: If you have a history of cold sores, ask us about pre-care instructions.

History

The demand for laser skin resurfacing has prompted some incredibly creative solutions. Previous resurfacing techniques meant long recovery times, skin that stayed red for months, often loss of natural skin color and sometimes irreversible scarring. The first *fractional* laser was brought to the market in 2005 and has quickly become popular with doctors and patients looking for results similar to traditional resurfacing (like CO2 lasers), but without the downtime, pain or risks.

Side Effects

The intensity and duration of your side effects depends on the treatment aggressiveness and your individual healing characteristics, but usually can last up to a week after treatment.

- **Swelling:** You will notice most of the swelling the first morning after treatment, particularly under the eyes. Swelling usually lasts two to three days. To minimize swelling:
 - Apply cold compresses to the treatment area for 10 minutes every hour
 - Sleep elevated the first night. Use as many pillows as you can tolerate.
- **Redness:** Most redness resolves during the first week after treatment, but a rosy 'glow' can remain for several weeks. If you wish, you can apply makeup immediately after treatment to minimize the redness.
- **Peeling/Flaking/Dry Skin:** Your skin may feel dry, peel or flake. You may notice a "sandpaper" texture a few days after treatment. This is normal; it is the treated tissue working its way out of your body as new fresh skin is regenerated.
- **Bronzing, Crusting, and Small Dark Spots:** These dark spots are a normal part of the healing process. They will slough off on their own usually within 7 days after treatment.
- **Raw Skin:** If you develop areas of raw skin after treatment, keep them moist with something like Aquaphor® or Bacitracin®. You do not need to apply band-aids, but keep the areas moist and *do not pick at them*. They will heal very rapidly on their own.
- **Grid-Like Pattern:** You may have a grid-like pattern on your skin, which is normal.
- **Papules/Pimples:** Sometimes small papules can arise post treatment, if this occurs please call us for treatment advice.

After Treatment Skin Care

- **Avoid Excessive Heat:** For 2 days post-treatment, avoid partaking in activities that will heat up your skin, such as going in a hot tub/Jacuzzi/sauna, or strenuous exercise.
- **Skin Care Products:** All of your skin care products should be non-irritating and non-clogging for the first week. Please do not use any scrubs, toners, glycolic acid, retinoids (RetinA or retinol), or bleaching creams (hydroquinoin) until your skin has healed.
- **Sunscreen:** Proper and frequent application of sunscreen is very important. The sunscreen should offer broadband protection (UVA and UVB) and have a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more. You should apply sunscreen 20 minutes before

going outside, and again, immediately before. After that, reapply your sunscreen every 2 hours. If direct sun exposure is necessary, wear a hat and clothing that covers the treated area. Use this regimen during the healing period and always.

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call!

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How does fractional resurfacing work?

A: The technology behind a fractional resurfacing treatment is as revolutionary as the results it can deliver. Unlike other laser treatments, fractional lasers utilize thousands of microscopic areas of skin, using pinpoint laser beams that penetrate beneath the skin's surface to eliminate old, damaged skin cells. Fractional resurfacing treatments stimulate the body's own natural healing process, which replaces damaged skin with fresh, glowing, healthy skin.

Q: How many fractional resurfacing treatments are recommended for optimal results?

A: Your skin, genetic make-up, lifestyle and personal history are unique. They all contribute to how your skin looks and feels. For most people, maximum results are realized in 3-5 sessions that are usually spaced 2-6 weeks apart. We can develop a treatment plan for your needs.

Q: How much social downtime is required?

A: Aggressive treatments require fewer sessions and result in more post treatment side effects, meaning a few days of social downtime. Less aggressive treatments accomplish the same results, with a few additional treatment sessions and less pronounced side effects. For some types of skin and skin conditions, gentle and/or fewer treatments are best.

Q: Can fractional resurfacing be used in delicate areas such as neck and chest?

A: Yes! Since fractional resurfacing treatment is so precise, it is safe and effective on delicate skin areas like the neck, chest and hands, in addition to the face.

Q: What results should be expected with fractional resurfacing treatment?

A: You can expect two levels of results, immediate and progressive. Immediately after the initial healing is complete, the surface of your skin will feel softer, look brighter, and tone will start to become even. Progressive results occur over the next 3-6 months as the deeper layers of skin continue to heal. You will notice reduced wrinkles and improved acne and surgical scars.

Q: Do fractional resurfacing treatments hurt?

A: Topical anesthesia is applied before the procedure to minimize discomfort. The treatment itself can be compared to a rubber band snapping on your skin along with a feeling of heat. After the treatment, most patients report tingling sensation similar to having gotten too much sun. This sensation usually disappears after 1-3 hours.

Q: How long do the effects of fractional resurfacing last?

A: It depends on your particular condition and how you care for your skin. Once your skin is restored, continue to protect it. We will give you specific advice based on your needs.