



Plastic Surgery & Dermatology Associates

Dr. Lowe's Laser Care Instructions

Medications

Anti-viral: Some patients will be given a regimen of antiviral medication. Patients with a history of herpetic lesions on the face may be prescribed Valtrex before or after the procedure.

Antibiotics: We may prescribe Cephalexin 500 mg three times a day until done. This is an antibiotic to reduce your risk of infection after the procedure. Antibiotics are not effective unless you complete the prescribed dose. Antibiotics are not indicated for every patient.

Pain Medication: Vicodin/Lortab or Darvocet will be given to control your pain. Take 1-2 tables every 4-6 hours as needed for pain. Take these medications with food or milk to avoid having nausea and/or vomiting. Most of the swelling and discomfort following the procedure will occur in the first 2-23 days. Keep your head elevated above your heart (2-3 pillows) to help decrease swelling and pain for approximately 7-10 days.

After Laser Care

After the procedure, especially the first 24-48 hours, your face may feel puffy and tight. The occlusive mask will need to be changed every 2-4 days so that it adheres to your skin and allows for healing.

One hour prior to your dressing change appointment, you may remove the gauze wrap or "fishnet" dressing holding the mask in place. **DO NOT REMOVE THE MASK.**

You may then shower and shampoo your hair, allowing the water to hit your face and mask. Please attempt to keep the mask on your face, even if the mask become loose. This helps to minimize discomfort while the nurse remove the old, soiled mask and replaces it.

The mask will usually remain for 7-10 days, depending on how the skin is healing. Any exposed areas, eyes, lips and earlobes should be covered with Vaseline ointment 3-4 times a day.

If laser resurfacing was performed around the mouth, you may use Vaseline ointment on the lips for the first 3-4 days and then switch to Carmex lip ointment until the dry, chapped lips are healed. Minimize talking and eat a soft diet or drink liquids for the first few days to help the dressing adhere.

After the occlusive dressing or Flexzan dressing is removed, you are to begin using a **1% hydrocortisone ointment twice a day for 5-7 days or the steroid prescribed by Dr. Lowe.** You may purchase the hydrocortisone over the counter without a prescription.

Laserabrasion Care Instructions continued

During this time, you may also apply a mild, hypoallergenic moisturizer 3-4 times a day as your skin may be dry and flaky. You may also use Benadryl cream if you have intolerable itching or take Benadryl 25 mg tablets as needed every 6 hours.

Once the steroid creams are discontinued and skin is healed, you will usually begin applying a **skin bleaching agent (hydroquinone)**. This product is used to keep the skin a uniform color and may be either in a cream or liquid solution. Begin applying the hydroquinone as instructed, **twice a day to the entire area that was treated**, being careful not to get it into your eyes. This product will be used for at least 2 months. If you develop a rash or are having a problem with this product, please notify Dr. Lowe.

Eight to ten days following the procedure, your skin usually will be healed. For the first 6-8 weeks following laserabrasion, your skin will be red and gradually diminished to a light pink color. During this time, you may begin applying hypoallergenic cosmetics. You can apply a green cover-up make-up, followed by a base make-up to camouflage the redness. Most patients can return to work or school 10-14 days after the laserabrasion procedure without any difficulty. Steroid creams may be prescribed to some patients if redness persists.

Your new skin will be extremely sensitive to sunlight. **PROTECT YOUR FACE FROM DIRECT SUNLIGHT**, as it will be even more susceptible to the sun's damaging rays. Wear wide brimmed hats, sunglasses and sunscreens, SPF 25 or greater. Sunscreen should be applied daily and frequently and your skin will remain sun sensitive in 3-6 months.

Please take all medications as directed. If you experience, nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath, diarrhea or a rash after taking your medication, please call Dr. Lowe's office.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CALL DR. LOWE'S OFFICE IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS AND WE WILL BE HAPPY TO HELP YOU.

Our office number is (405) 749-4227.

JBL