



John Hilinski M.D.
PLASTIC SURGERY

GUIDELINES BEFORE AND AFTER LASER PEEL

LEADING UP TO THE LASER PEEL

Hydroquinone

In an effort to calm down the melanin cells in your skin, Dr. Hilinski will prescribe **hydroquinone topical cream**. Hydroquinone is a bleaching agent for your skin. This should be started 10-14 days in advance of the laser treatment. The hydroquinone should be applied to any area where the laser treatment is planned. Apply a smooth, uniform layer once per day.

Anti-virals

If you have a history of cold sores or herpes, please alert our office. If this is the case, we will want to prescribe you an **anti-viral medication** (such as Famvir or Acyclovir) that should be started 2-3 days prior to the laser and continued for 2-3 days after the treatment. This will help reduce chances of an outbreak.

Pain Medication

Pain after an office-based laser peel is typically well controlled with use of over-the-counter Tylenol and/or NSAIDS (Motrin, Advil, Ibuprofen etc).

Isotretinoin

It is important that you have not been exposed to isotretinoin, more commonly known as Accutane, for at least 9 months prior to your laser skin treatment. **If you have been taking any form of isotretinoin within this 9-month period, you should cancel your laser treatment** and wait until sufficient time has passed. Failure to do so can lead to serious complications.

Smoking

You must refrain from smoking for at least four (4) weeks prior to surgery and at least four (4) weeks after surgery. You should also avoid being in the same room with people who smoke for the same period. Failure to do so will contribute to a significant risk of surgical complications, including very poor wound healing.

Sun Exposure

You should avoid sun exposure to the planned areas of laser resurfacing within the two (2) weeks prior to your scheduled date and at least 12 weeks after the laser.

Self-Tanning

You should avoid self-tanning in the month prior to your laser peel.

Arnica

Start taking Arnica five (5) days prior to the laser peel and continue to do so for several days after the peel. Arnica is a supplement that Dr. Hilinski recommends for his patients to help reduce the incidence of inflammation. Arnica can be purchased at your local pharmacy.

Topical Skin Products

Please remove all make-up, face creams, and moisturizers the night before your peel and do not apply any of these on the day of the peel.

Piercings



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You should remove all piercings from around the area where the peel is going to be performed.

Clothing

Please wear comfortable, loose-fitting clothing on the day of your laser peel. We prefer you come dressed in a button-down shirt as this minimizes concerns of you pulling clothing over, for instance, the face region.

Hair

If you have longer hair, we ask that you place it in a high ponytail on the top of your head using a hair tie.

LASER PEEL RECOVERY

Anti-Virals

You should continue taking the anti-viral medication until the prescription course has been completed.

Benadryl

You may take some Benadryl during the first 1-2 days if you have any itching, which is normal. Benadryl is over the counter and may be purchased at your local pharmacy. Take 1-2 tablets of these every eight (8) hours as needed.

Wound Care

It is completely normal for your skin to appear red and inflamed immediately after the laser peel. You will also have a layer of emollient over the areas that were lasered.

Some degree of mild burning and warmth are typical sensations patients experience in the first 1-2 days.

Mild swelling is normal after the laser peel.

LASER PEEL WOUND CARE

TAKING PROPER CARE OF THE LASERED SKIN IS ABSOLUTELY CRITICAL TO ACHIEVING AN IDEAL RESULT.

DAY 1

- Apply ice cold compresses on the lasered areas with a CLEAN, damp, soft cloth for 10-20 minutes every hour to help relieve some discomfort and swelling.
- Apply a topical balm or emollient 3-4 times the first day to help keep the lasered skin moisturized. The skin should NOT dry out during the early healing process.
- If you were provided with SkinMedica 360 Power Duo, apply the Post Procedure Repair Complex to the skin first. Then apply the Restorative Ointment.

DAY 2-5

- Continue with the ice-cold compresses as needed.
- Starting on day 2 of your recovery, begin cleaning the lasered areas. Cleaning should be done 4-6 times per day. The purpose of cleaning is to remove the weeping, yellow-brown discharge that will tend to accumulate over the lasered skin. You want to avoid this



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accumulation and minimize scabbing and crusting, which impede proper healing. But do NOT be so aggressive that you cause skin bleeding.

- Keep in mind that certain areas will heal faster than others depending on the depth of penetration of the laser.
- Vinegar soaks are recommended for the cleaning sessions. First put a teaspoon of white vinegar (the same vinegar you might have in your house already) into a cereal bowl sized vessel containing cold, clean water. Then soak 4x4 gauze in this vinegar solution. Place the 4x4 gauze onto the lasered skin. You want the 4x4 gauze saturated but don't allow it to seep around your eyes, nose or mouth. Leave the saturated 4x4 on the skin for 20-30 minutes. At this point it may appear as if the gauze is drying out, which is fine. Gently peel the 4x4 gauze off of the skin. You should visibly see some yellow-brown debris on the undersurface of the 4x4 gauze, which is what we want to see. This indicates you are doing a good job.
- Then apply a layer of the SkinMedica 360 Power Duo - apply the Post Procedure Repair Complex to the skin first. Then apply the Restorative Ointment.
- Again, this cleaning process should be done 4-6 times per day.

DAY 5-10

- By day 5, the skin surface should be much less inflamed, and the weeping discharge should have slowed significantly or stopped altogether. If there are scattered, residual areas that are still inflamed, continue cleaning them with the protocol referenced above for a few more days.
- For all areas where the skin is no longer raw and weeping has stopped, you can forego the cleaning protocol – and start using only a bland moisturizer, such as Aquaphor, 3-4 times per day.

It is normal for the skin to feel tight. Itching is also normal in many cases. Peeling and flaking may be noted for upwards of 10 days after the laser peel. BUT NO MATTER HOW TEMPTING, DO NOT PICK AT THE SKIN OR SCRUB THE SKIN.

OTHER POSTOPERATIVE CONSIDERATIONS

Showering

Avoid showering during the first 1-2 days of recovery. If you must, you can shower from the shoulders down but you must avoid getting any of the lasered areas wet in the first 1-2 days.

Makeup After Surgery

Do not resume wearing any makeup for 4-5 days after the peel.

Sun Precautions

You should avoid direct sun exposure on the lasered areas for several months after surgery. Doing so will help minimize chances of abnormal skin pigmentation. It is best to use a sun block that contains aluminum oxide or zinc oxide crystals to help reflect sun if you are out and about. A wide brimmed hat is also helpful in shading the ears when outdoors.

Saunas

Avoid saunas and hot tubs for at least 2 weeks after the laser peel.

QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS



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If you have any questions or concerns regarding the information contained here, please do not hesitate in contacting our office.