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Fraxel Post Care

Fraxel® Laser Treatment produces side effects. The intensity and duration of your side effects depends on the treatment aggressiveness and your individual healing characteristics. Generally, patients who are treated more aggressively experience more intense and longer lasting side effects; however, some patients who receive a less aggressive treatment may experience side effects of greater-than-expected magnitude, while others receiving more aggressive treatments may experience side effects of less-than-expected magnitude. Notify your physician if the severity of your side effects becomes a problem for you.

What you may feel and look like:

- Immediately after the treatment, you will experience **redness, swelling** and sometimes **pinpoint bleeding**. You will notice most of the swelling on the first morning after treatment, particularly under the eyes. Swelling usually lasts two to three days. To minimize swelling do the following:
 - Apply cold compresses to the treatment area for 10 minutes of every hour on the day of treatment, until you go to bed.
 - Sleep elevated the first night. Use as many pillows as you can tolerate.
- **Heat sensation** can be intense for the following 2 – 3 hours. Occasionally **oozing** can occur in isolated areas for a few days as well.
- Over the next few days, redness may worsen. Swelling may be significant and cause some discomfort. Some patients will also experience itching.
- You may also notice that your skin appears bronzed or **little dark dots** will appear on the treated area. Your skin may feel dry, peel, or flake. You may notice a “sandpaper” texture a few days after treatment. This is the treated tissue working its way out of your body as new fresh skin is regenerated.
- Patients who are treated more heavily with the 1550 wavelength can expect to be noticeably swollen for 48 hours (it will be most noticeable around the eyes). They may be “puffy” for a total of 3-5 days, and this is normal. Sleeping elevated and periodically icing should help significantly. Patients treated more heavily with the 1927 wavelength will not notice as much swelling and the duration should be shorter. Slight puffiness around the eyes is normal. Treatments with the 1927 wavelength will result in more bronzing and redness.
- This dead skin is a normal result of laser treatment and should start **sloughing** off 3 – 4 days after the treatment. Most patients complete this process 5 – 7 days after a treatment on the face. (On off-face areas, such as hands/arms, where healing is slower, the process may take up to 2 weeks.)

- Once the sloughing is complete, you may notice some **pinkness** over the next few weeks. 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 to minimize the redness.

Immediately After Treatment

- Apply a bland moisturizer (**i.e. Cerave or Cetaphil® cream**) or a very thin layer of petrolatum ointment (**i.e. Aquaphor®**). Use petrolatum ointment to cover any area with oozing and keep moist.
 - Use of icepacks helps alleviate the heat sensation
 - You may cleanse your face with a mild cleanser (**i.e. Cerave or Cetaphil® cleanser**).
 - **Bleaching Creams** - Discontinue use of your bleaching cream while your skin is tender. Restart your bleaching cream on: _____
 - **Cold Sores** - If you have a history of cold sores, ask your doctor about care!
 - **Abnormal Healing** - If you notice any blisters, cuts, bruises, crusting/scabs, areas of raw skin, ulcerations, active bleeding, increased discomfort or pain, pigment changes (lighter or darker than usual complexion), or any other problems, please contact us as soon as possible.
 - **Other Instructions:** _____
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First One to Two Weeks – Healing Process

- Continue cleansing and moisturizing with the recommended bland products to prevent clogged pores and breakouts.
- Once the sloughing starts, please allow your skin to heal and **DO NOT** scrub, rub, or use exfoliants. Keep clothing away from treated body parts as much as possible to avoid irritation.
- During the first week of healing avoid smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, excessive exercise, perspiring, swimming, or exposing skin to heat and sun.
- Remember that peeling and/or flaking is normal during the healing process.
- Avoid scrubs, toners, glycolic acids and Retin A for a week to two weeks until skin has healed
- It is very important that you use sunscreen to prevent sun damage to the skin. Sunscreen should offer broadband protection (UVA and UVB) and have a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more. Once sloughing is complete, use sunscreen daily for at least 3 months after your last treatment. Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going outside, and again, immediately before. Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours. If direct sun exposure is necessary, wear a hat and clothing that covers the treated area. Your practice of diligent sunscreen use may lower the risk of laser-induced hyperpigmentation (darker color).