

# Houston Methodist ENT Specialists

## Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery

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### Post-Operative Care Following

## F A C I A L P E E L S

Call our office promptly if:

- √ **There is an unusual amount of pain or bleeding**
- √ **You experience cold sore eruptions**
- √ **You have fever or chills.**

If any of the above should occur after regular office hours, we can be reached 24 hours a day through our answering service at **713-441-FACE (3223)**.

### *What Can I Expect?*

- √ After the initial application of the peel solution, you will feel a stinging pain for several seconds.
- √ Within several hours, expect the pain to recur and it will last approximately 4 to 6 hours. In addition, you may develop swelling, and depending on the area being treated, it is occasionally severe.
- √ The pain is usually relieved or lessened by taking one or two of the prescribed pain tablets every 3 hours (as needed). Ice packs may also be applied to the peeled area(s) for relief.
- √ Try not to move the peeled area(s) excessively. Keep your lips stiff and avoid grimacing.
- √ The day following surgery any absorbent dressings can be removed and the following cleansing program should begin:
  - Using gauze squares or a washcloth, soak the treated area(s) with a solution of one (1) tablespoon of white vinegar and one (1) cup of cool water. This should be done at least 6 to 8 times per day until the skin is completely healed (usually within 7 to 10 days). Any bluish-gray coating should be gently soaked off. Pat the skin dry, and apply a heavy layer of Aquaphor or A&D ointment. Dilute the vinegar by half if it is too strong. You should keep the treated area(s) moist with ointments at **ALL TIMES**. Do not pick or remove crusted areas. Do not allow areas to dry out or scab over.
- √ Never pick at crusts or pieces of skin that do not loosen easily. They will come off with time.
- √ The hair follicles and sweat glands in your face contain skin elements that begin to grow after the peel. Within 5 to 10 days the peeled areas are covered with a very fine, thin layer of new skin, which must be protected against drying by using mild moisturizing creams.
- √ No make-up should be applied until all the areas are completely covered with new skin. This usually takes 10 to 14 days. After an office visit to check the condition of the skin, you may start using a hypoallergenic make-up base (i.e. Jane Iredale, Clinique or Almay).
- √ The initial redness of the peeled areas will fade rapidly, but will remain pink as the skin thickens for a period of 6 to 8 weeks. The skin will remain tense and smooth as the finer wrinkles and deep grooves become less evident. Occasionally small “whiteheads” may appear in the treated areas, but usually disappear within 2 to 3 weeks without any specific treatment. If you are prone to develop fever blisters or cold sores, you may experience a flare-up of these lesions. If you have had shingles, especially in the facial area, you are at risk for recurrence.
- √ **AVOID DIRECT SUNLIGHT OR SUNLAMPS FOR 6 TO 8 WEEKS.** If the new, delicate skin, is exposed too early, then blotching may occur. After this initial period you must still protect the peeled areas for at least 6 months. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and use protective sunscreen with maximum sun blockage (i.e. PreSun 15). Do not restart hormone pills (birth control, etc) before discussion with the doctor.

- √ Your skin will begin to return to normal color around the third week following laser surgery. Pigment gel or another bleaching medication may be necessary if you notice any darkening or pigmentation changes. You will need a prescription for this, which you can get by calling our office.
- √ Avoid using contact lenses, and all glycolic acid until instructed by your physician.
- √ Apply ice to the treated area of your face for the first 24 hours to help reduce the swelling and discomfort. (Ten minutes on, ten minutes off, works well.) The treated area can be covered with a sheet of wax paper and then apply ice. (A bag of frozen peas works well as an ice substitute.)

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Keep hairdryer heat away from face for 3 to 4 weeks to avoid thermal burns
- Do not color hair for at least two weeks to avoid chemicals accidentally getting onto treated area(s).
- Start replenishing your fluids **immediately** by drinking 6 to 8 glasses of water daily for at least 2 to 3 weeks following your surgery.
- If the area around the mouth has been lasered, eating may be difficult for a while. Try drinking sport drinks to meet nutritional needs.