

Laser Resurfacing

**Pre-Operative Instructions:**

**Procedure date/time:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you** for choosing us as your anti-aging provider. Please Review the following instructions prior to your scheduled treatment. Arrive 15 minutes prior to your scheduled appointment and park in the rear of the building as you will exit through our private door.

**Anytime Prior to Procedure:**

Prior to your treatment we suggest you purchase the following items:

- Vinegar
- New makeup sponges or brushes
- Brush wash
- Clean soft washcloths
- 2 bags of frozen peas or corn
- Vitamin C (1000mg)
- Thermometer
- Acetaminophen

**Two Weeks Prior to Procedure:**

**We recommend taking Vitamin C (1000 mg daily) starting 2 weeks prior to the treatment, and continuing daily for 3 to 6 months post-treatment (recommendation only).** Histamine levels increase after tissue injury which contributes to inflammation. Vitamin C is a natural antihistamine, reducing the body's production of histamine. Vitamin C also improves tissue growth and wound repair, helps heal scars and bruises, and helps the body not only produce new collagen but also provides added tensile strength to newly formed collagen. We also recommend two weeks prior to the procedure that patients purchase Arnica and Bromeline with Quercetin supplements to assist with the healing process after the procedure. Both supplements are available for purchase in store.

Some clients prefer to take an oral sedative prior to treatment, such as:

- lorazepam (**Ativan®**)
- diazepam (**Valium®**)
- alprazolam (**Xanax®**) or
- hydroxyzine (**Vistaril®, Atarax**)

Please call your Physician for a prescription, if you wish to take one of the above prior to your treatment. You must arrange for a ride home post treatment. Bring prescription with you, **DO NOT TAKE PRIOR**, you must sign your consent form first.

Laser therapy can activate the Herpes Simplex Virus i.e. Cold Sores.

All clients are placed on anti-viral medication prophylactically to inhibit the outbreak of Herpes Simplex 1 (even if you do not have a history of cold sores.) Please pick up this prescription from your pharmacy and take as directed.

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Initials

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Initials

date

**Discontinue Agents that cause Bruising or Bleeding:** (unless they are medically necessary) such as:

- ✓ **vitamin E**
- ✓ **fish oil**
- ✓ **gingko biloba**
- ✓ **garlic supplements**
- ✓ **cholesterol medications**
- ✓ **Pepto-Bismol**
- ✓ **Alka-Seltzer products**
- ✓ **Oil of Evening Primrose**  
and any over-the-counter medications that contain non-steroidal anti-inflammatories such as:
- ✓ **aspirin** (Bayer, St. Joseph, Bufferin)
- ✓ **Ibuprophen** (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin)
- ✓ **naproxen** (Aleve)
- ✓ **nabumetone** (Relafen)
- ✓ **indomethacin** (Indocin)
- ✓ **acetaminophen/aspirin/caffeine** (Excedrin)

**Three Days Prior to Procedure:**

**No Alcoholic Beverages starting 3 days prior to laser therapy:** Alcohol dilates blood vessels and leads to post-operative bleeding. Besides reducing the effectiveness of certain pain relievers, it can also increase the risk and degree of the side effects associated with those pain relievers. Recent research seems to indicate that drinking can reduce the efficiency of the immune system for a time. In short, alcohol increases the risks of complications and slows down the recovery process.

**Begin taking Arnica and Bromeline**

**Day of Procedure:**

**Wear Loose Fitting Clothing:** That button or zip up the front (i.e., rather than a pullover top that has to be pulled over the face and head).

**Arrive Clean Shaven:** Male patients should arrive clean shaven if treatment is to take place on the face.

**No Makeup:** Female clients please arrive at the office with the area of skin intended for treatment free from any:

- ✓ makeup
- ✓ cosmetics
- ✓ creams
- ✓ perfumes
- ✓ lotions
- ✓ powders
- ✓ or any other skin preparations (except sunblock if applicable)

**No Hairspray:** (hairspray is flammable).

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Initials

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Initials

date

**No Earrings or jewelry**

**Day Of Post-Laser Procedure Instructions:**

***During your healing process you need to be very careful to prevent infection. Wash your hands with antibacterial soap prior to applying any product to your face. Do not rub or pick at your face. Do not use any products other than the products supplied to you.***

**Note:** Failure to precisely follow prescribed post-op care instructions can lead to complications and scarring.

**Burning Phase:** Immediately post-op and up to 3 hours after treatment, the treated area will have a slight burning sensation similar to sunburn. You may apply bags of frozen veggies wrapped in a towel (corn, peas) to your face in 15-minute intervals. Re-apply Elta Md Post laser ointment every 3- 4 hours followed by spraying your face with Refrigerated Spring Water for 24 hours.

**Note:** Never put ice directly on the treated skin for more than a few minutes unless the ice is wrapped in some sort of protective covering (such as a towel) as this can cause frost bite!

**Re-apply Elta MD Post Laser Ointment** every 3-4 hours followed by spraying face with cold spring water for 24 hours

**Elevate Head:** When sleeping the first night after treatment, elevate the head (or other treated area) using 2 – 3 pillows to reduce swelling. Place an old pillowcase or towel as to not soil your linens.

**Bath/shower:** You can shower or bath at any point in time post-treatment (although better to wait until the next day). If a bath or shower is taken within the first 24 hours, avoid using hot water. Preferably take short warm showers or baths. (Cold showers may be soothing and help remove heat). If you take a shower, avoid running hot water directly on the treated area. After bathing, gently pat dry the treated area with a soft cloth. Never wipe hard with a towel. Wash your hair everyday with baby shampoo (or other non-irritating shampoo) until completely healed.

**No Hot Tubes, Jacuzzis, or Swimming Pools (with chemicals/chlorine) until redness is completely gone.**

**No Strenuous Exercise:** Do not participate in any strenuous exercise (such as bending, squatting, straining, or heavy lifting) until all redness has completed resolved. Avoid activities that cause excessive perspiration. No contact sports.

**Minimize Facial Expressions:** If the skin around the mouth is tight, minimize facial expressions until healed.

**No Alcoholic Beverages:** Patients should avoid alcohol for 24 to 48 hours post-op (or until redness is gone).

**Recovery process:** The recovery process will vary from patient to patient and on the level of treatment prescribed. On average, 5 – 7 days on the face, and 7 – 10 days off face (e.g., neck, décolletage, dorsum of the hands, arms, etc.)

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Initials

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Initials

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## **24 Hours Post-Procedure:**

**Re-epithelialization/crusting Phase (days 24-48 hours post procedure):** Your skin will appear uneven, red, and/or mixed with brown, or Carmel colored. This is usually when you look the worst.

**Start Vinegar Soaks** (24 hours after procedure until all crusting has peeled off and your skin has re-epithelialized i.e. your skin is pink and intact = re-epithelialized)

### **Vinegar soaks regimen:**

1. *Thoroughly wash hands before touching the treated area (use antiseptic soap).*
2. *Prepare a water/vinegar solution as follows:*
  - a. *Mix 1 teaspoon (5 ml) of plain white vinegar with 1 cup (237 ml) of cool tap water*

*If this solution stings or burns, dilute vinegar solution by using 1 teaspoon to 2 cups (1 pint) of water. This solution may be mixed a head of time and put in the refrigerator. Prepare a new solution each time to prevent contamination.*
3. *Take a clean wash cloth (gauze pad or cotton swab) and soak it in the water/vinegar solution. Ring out any excess and then lay it over the treated area for 10 to 15 minutes. Do not rub vigorously but using the wash cloth you may gently remove (don't pick) any loose crusting.*
4. *When done soaking, gently pat the treated area dry with a clean soft towel. You can't soak too much. Soaking will reduce redness and speed healing. Note, you do not have to remove all of the moisturizer from off your face during the soaking process.*
5. *Next, reapply the cooling ointment generously.*
6. *Repeat this procedure 3 to 4 times daily until all crusting is gone.*

## **48 Hours Post-Procedure:**

**Discontinue Elta MD Post Laser Ointment**

**Exfoliation/shedding Phase (48 hours post - day 5): Begin Using a gentle moisturizer such as our YOLO Chemistry ultra light or the SOS kit. If it stings go back to using the post laser cream and try again in 24 hours. Apply every 3-4 hours and gradually decrease duration as the skin begins to heal. Continue with vinegar soaks. Do not pick skin or remove skin from your face.**

**Note:** You can place the thermal spring water gel in the refrigerator as using a moisturizer that has been refrigerated will continue to aid in tissue cooling and reduce post-procedure swelling and discomfort.

**Note:** If your laser therapy was more aggressive, you may experience increased post-operative edema, erythema (redness) and recovery times from those stated above.

## **Final Healing Phase (days 6-7):**

Start long term skin care products that were provided, Avoid the sun (wear a hat) use the Sunscreen provided to you daily even on cloudy days, even when driving.

**Once Re-Epithelialization is Complete** (skin is not broken, crusting phase has subsided, treated area is smooth, red and pink): soaks and ointments are discontinued, makeup and sunblock can now be applied.

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Initials

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Initials

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**Makeup:** We recommend using water-based makeup or mineral makeup. Purchase new application sponges or brushes as infection or acne eruption can be caused by accumulated bacteria. Your skin will be more susceptible to irritation from makeup and hence it should be applied cautiously and conservatively. If irritation occurs switch to something less sensitizing.

**Pain:** Other than a mild burning sensation for the first few hours, most patients experience no other pain. For mild pain, you can take acetaminophen (Tylenol or equivalent) for discomfort. Do not take aspirin or aspirin related drugs during the healing period.

**Note:** Intense pain may be a sign of infection. In such cases you should seek immediate medical attention by calling your Physician, or if after hours go to the Emergency room. Please notify us immediately as well.

**Pruitis (itching):** Some patients experience a high level of itchiness for 2 – 3 days.

This is normally due to the release of histamines during the healing process, which is a good sign, however it could also be a sign of dry skin due to inadequate use of moisturizers. Please notify us if you have excessive itching.

**Possible Complications:**

Call the office immediately if you have any fever, chills or pain after treatment that is not relieved by the prescribed pain medication. Also if you have excessive redness, blistering, swelling, bleeding, itching, yellow or cloudy discharge (increasing pain with deterioration in the appearance of the skin may be the first signs of infection). Failure to diagnose and promptly treat these conditions may delay healing and lead to scarring.

Your follow-up appointments are scheduled for:

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Please call for your 6 month follow up.

Thank you.

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Initials

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Initials

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**About the Healing Process/FAQ/Complications:**

The tissue healing process begins soon after laser treatment. Re-epithelialization is usually complete within 24 to 48 hours. During the early stages of healing, inflammation will cause capillaries near a wound to dilate and become permeable, allowing fluid from the circulatory system (serous) and lymphatic system (lymph) to leak into the site of injury. This fluid, called exudate, is pale-yellow or straw colored that provides moisture to the wound bed (also contains healing agents) which is an essential part of the normal healing process.

Healing starts with the migration of epidermal keratinocytes from islands of undamaged tissue and from nearby epidermal adnexal structures (sweat glands, sebaceous glands, & hair follicles) to the edges of the laser wounds. This migration of epithelial cells continues horizontally across the wound bed until the epithelial cells grow together. Next, the undifferentiated keratinocytes start the differentiation process, dividing and migrating upwards to recreate a new epidermis.

A moist environment will aid in keratinocyte migration during the healing process, therefore it is essential that the skin be kept moist until re-epithelialization is complete. Initially, some exudate is good which acts as a natural wound covering, provides the wound with nutrients and growth factors, controls infection, and supplies moisture to the wound all of which aids in the natural healing process. Nevertheless, if this biologic material is allowed to buildup (even if it is kept moist) it can eventually retard effective epithelialization, foster colonization of bacteria causing infection, resulting in slower healing and dermatitis.

If the exudate is allowed to dry out and form a crust or scab, it will impede healing even more, will increase pruritis (itching), and if peeled off prematurely, can lead to scarring. Patients should be refrained from inappropriately removing any crusting.

**Moisturizing Process:** Exudate can be kept moist by applying copious amounts of topical moisturizer periodically (3 to 4 times a day minimum) or whenever the skin starts to feel dry.

**Soaks/gentle cleansing:** it is important to soak and/or gently cleanse the treated tissue several times a day (starting the next morning) using a soft cloth saturated in plain water, saline, or hydrogen peroxide (alternatively, a dilute vinegar solution can be used as explained below).

This will help keep the skin moist, will aid in removing any exudate build-up (crusting) and will also allow the moisturizing ointment (applied immediately after soaking) to better penetrate the surface of the skin.

As the re-epithelialization process progresses the frequency of soaks and application of an occlusive ointment can be tapered off (from every 2 – 3 hours to every 4 – 5 hours). Ointment use can be slowly decreased starting first during the day and later also during the night switching to a mild less occlusive moisturizer with/without sunblock. Once the peeling process is complete washes and soaks can be discontinued altogether.

**Vinegar Soaks:** Gentle cleaning and soaking with a diluted vinegar solution (which is mildly acidic) will help dissolve any unwanted material from the wounded skin use, alleviate pain (soothing), promote healing, and inhibit bacterial growth (especially against pseudomonas and gram negatives).

Vinegar has a tonic action that promotes blood circulation in the small capillaries that irrigate the skin. It is also antiseptic, preventing the proliferation of bacteria, viruses, or yeast that triggers infection. It can dissolve excessive fatty deposits at the skin surface, dissolve and cleanse any necrotic material, and reduce scaly or peeling conditions. Lastly, vinegar regulates the pH of the skin.

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**Regarding Sunblock: All sunblock's are not equal.** Do not use sunscreens since they absorb UV light and release it as heat into the skin. Rather, use sunblock which deflects or scatters (blocks) UV light.

**For optimal sunblock protections chose a sunblock that is a "Physical sunblock." A Physical sunblock contains Zinc and/or Titanium to effectively block against UVA (UV aging) and UVB (UV burn). Avoiding the sun is the most important thing you can do to prevent photoaging.**

- ✓ Avoid all direct sun exposure, when you come to us for your follow-up appointment wear a hat
- ✓ Apply sunscreen ½ hour before going outside for improved protection.
- ✓ Use sunblock for at least two weeks (3 – 6 months is better) after treatment any time outside in sun. (Sun avoidance and use of sunblock should be a life-long endeavor.)
- ✓ Use a mirror to apply sunblock evenly.
- ✓ Sunscreen must be reapplied every 2 hours to be fully effective and in the correct quantity.
- ✓ Also use physical blockers such as hats, scarves and sunglasses when possible.

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Initials

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Initials

date

## Pre/Post op checklist

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Client \_\_\_\_\_

Have client pay if there is a balance \_\_\_\_\_

Make sure client parked in rear of building \_\_\_\_\_

Remove any Jewelry and give to client Yes \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

Apply surgical cap if client has hairspray, otherwise use headband \_\_\_\_\_

Check to see if client has discontinued all blood thinners (list blood thinners on chart) \_\_\_\_\_ RN only

Such as vitamin E, fish oil ginkgo bilobagarlic supplements cholesterol medications Pepto-Bismol Alka-Seltzer products Oil of Evening Primrose and any over-the-counter medications that contain non-steroidal anti-inflammatories such as: aspirin (Bayer, St. Joseph, Bufferin) Ibuprophen (Advil, Motrin, Nuprin) naproxen (Aleve) nabumetone (Relafen) indomethacin (Indocin) acetaminophen/aspirin/caffeine (Excedrin)

Check history of herpes/cold sores (make sure client has picked up Rx for anti-virals) \_\_\_\_\_ RN only

If client has history of acne or active acne, make sure client has Rx for antibiotics \_\_\_\_\_ RN only

If client has taken oral sedative make sure client has a ride home (get telephone number of their ride) \_\_\_\_\_

Ask client if they have a history of hyperpigmentation or keloids note on chart \_\_\_\_\_ RN only

Ask client to use restroom \_\_\_\_\_

Notify MD to review informed consent with client \_\_\_\_\_

If client has a sedative they may take at this time Yes \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

If Yes, note telephone number of their ride \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Clean face using clarisonic with gentle cleanser, wipe face with ETOH, perform light microderm. Call RN to apply topical anesthetic (set timer for 45 minutes) \_\_\_\_\_

Make client comfortable, provide warm blanket, magazine \_\_\_\_\_

Provide client with their aftercare products and review with client \_\_\_\_\_

## Post Laser

Apply cool compress to client's face use Zimmer to cool \_\_\_\_\_

Reassure client \_\_\_\_\_

Notify client's family/friends if in office or call for ride \_\_\_\_\_

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Initials

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Initials

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