

AFTERCARE – Chemical Peel

So you've just had a chemical peel and now you're left with dry, irritated, peeling skin—all side effects which are perfectly common post-peel. *Here's what you do and what you don't do:*

Do's:

- **Treat your skin gently.** Use a mild cleanser and instead of using a washcloth on your face, switch to a gentler option like a baby washcloth, a sponge or your fingertips. The rough texture of a wash cloth or brush is too aggravating for skin that is already irritated.
- **For faster healing** - Use the soothing and nourishing products recommended in your consultation by your skin therapist.
- **Use antioxidants.** Since the skin has been traumatized, free radical production is high. Suppress the free radical activity with a topical antioxidant that we will choose based on your skin type.
- **Use a skin lightener.** Since chemical peels can stimulate melanin activity, you don't want to end up with post-inflammatory hyper pigmentation, a condition where you can develop brown spots post-peel (common in skin that already struggles with discoloration/brown spots). There are different types of pharmaceutical grade products, formulated for preventing and lightening discoloration. We will consider many aspects about your skin before recommending a particular one for you.
- **Wear Sunscreen.** You're exposing vulnerable immature cells so you must make sure they don't get damaged from UV rays. Apply the sunscreen recommended by your skin therapist to your face and neck and chest – *daily*.
- **Limit your time outdoors** and wear hats and big sunglasses to reduce sun exposure.
- **Resume your normal skin care routine** after 7 days, including Retin-A.

Don'ts:

- **Pick at the skin!** The whole purpose of a chemical peel is to “burn” off the surface dry, damaged cell layers and reveal younger-looking, healthy new cells. But to do this, the skin has to shed and that's part that people dislike the most. But picking off dry, flaky skin when it may not be ready to come off can result in scarring, unnecessary redness and delayed healing. Plus, picking off the skin creates a higher risk of sun damage to the tender new skin cells.

Don't forget to use your sunscreen every day!

- **Don't over-moisturize** to compensate for post-peeling dryness. When the skin is peeling and flaky, it's normal to want to apply heavier moisturizer to alleviate dryness and comfort the irritated skin. The whole purpose of a chemical peel is to peel. So to hydrate peeling skin when it wants to shed off, will not give you the best benefit and prolongs the down-time of the peel. Just use your regular moisturizer and let the skin do what it wants to do.
- **Don't exfoliate.** It is so important to not remove the dry skin before its time and to let the skin shed naturally. Facial scrubs and acids will only irritate the irritation further and could result in scarring the skin.

Bottom line: Hands off, use calming ingredients, nourish it with antioxidants, protect your skin with professional zinc oxide sunscreen and let the healing process run its course.

Please free to call us with any questions you may have.