

GEORGIA DERMATOLOGIC SURGERY CENTERS, P.C.

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CHEMICAL PEEL PRE-OP INSTRUCTIONS

Chemical peeling involves the application of an agent to the skin, which causes it to separate and peel off after a few days. It will help REDUCE the signs of sun damage (fine lines, freckles and uneven skin tone) or acne marks. Chemical peels typically do not go deep enough to work on most wrinkles-those are better addressed with a laser peel or possibly collagen or Botox injections. No procedure can guarantee removal of ALL blemishes or damage acquired by years of sun exposure.

The exact chemical and strength used will be determined by Dr. Baucom/Dr. Pharis, and will be based on the extent of sun damage present, your skin type, and your goals for the procedure.

Chemical peels are not covered by most medical insurance plans because they are performed for cosmetic reasons. Occasionally, a chemical peel might be considered for coverage by an insurer when the patient has extreme sun damage and many precancers present.

BEFORE THE PEEL:

- **SUNSCREEN:** plan on using sunscreen daily; there is no point in trying to reverse/reduce sun damage if you are still trying to get tan.
- **ANTIVIRAL MEDICATION:** You will start an antiviral medication the evening prior to the procedure, and continue it for one week.
- **RETIN-A/RENOVA:** Most patients will benefit from using tretinoin (the active agent in Retin-A and Renova) for a few weeks before the peel, as it will speed up healing. This will be continued after the area has healed to promote more new collagen formation.
- **BLEACHING AGENT:** (Lustra or other brand) will be used in some patients to maintain an even skin tone following the peel. Patients who are naturally very fair skinned often will be able to skip this.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE PEEL:

- **2 HOURS BEFORE THE PEEL:** apply a thin layer of the anesthetic cream, reapply after about an hour. This will reduce the stinging associated with the procedure
- **Before the procedure:** please arrive wearing no makeup or moisturizer, or arrive 10-15 minutes early to thoroughly remove these in the restroom.
- **Anxiety:** can be reduced with some Valium given before the procedure, but then you will not be allowed to drive yourself home. If you feel that you will be very anxious, please have someone come with you who can drive you home.
- **Pain:** application of the peeling agent causes a fairly intense stinging, which does not last long. As soon as the treated area "frosts" (it looks like a light pink film over the skin), cold wet compresses are applied to the area and left in place for several minutes. The stinging decreases in intensity; most patients describe it as a sunburn like sensation. Tylenol or Advil can be taken if necessary.

WHAT WILL I LOOK LIKE?

At first, the pink frost will fade to a mild to moderate redness very similar to a sunburn. This "sunburn" period will last for about one day, and you are usually reasonably presentable. The next stage is the damaged skin drying and separating-not very pretty. Your skin will take on a brown or bronze look and feel fairly dry and tight. As you peel off the old, sun damaged skin, the fresh new pink skin will be revealed underneath. This is the period (usually a day or two) when your skin looks really blotchy and uneven. After the main peeling takes place, your skin will be fresh and somewhat pink, and you may resume make-up and cosmetics. Final fading or the pinkness will take a few weeks.

***** INCASE OF EMERGENCY *****

Call 404-943-1996 for instructions on paging Dr. Baucom or Dr. Pharis

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