

## **CENTER FOR FACIAL, ORAL & IMPLANT SURGERY**

### **Post-Op Laser Resurfacing Instructions**

#### Immediately after surgery:

The skin of the face will be very pink or red and may have small areas of bleeding. The skin will ooze clear or strawberry colored fluid. Petrolatum ointment (Vaseline) will be applied immediately after surgery and should be left undisturbed until the next morning when you come to the clinic to be seen. You may apply more Petrolatum ointment (Vaseline) if the skin becomes dry, crusted, or an area gets rubbed off. Avoid any trauma to the surgery area. **Do not shave until directed. Do not wipe the face--- only dab if necessary.**

Apply ice packs to the face. An ice pack should be applied alternately to each side of the face every ten minutes to avoid damaging the skin. You may continue using the ice pack for the first 48 hours which will help reduce swelling. You may also sleep with your head elevated by extra pillows or sleep in a recliner.

Today you will start the Medrol Dose Pack and take as prescribed on the box. Pain medication may be taken as needed.

Drink plenty of fluids since you will be losing lots of fluid from your surgery.

#### The day after surgery:

You will come to the clinic in the morning and the doctor will do the first cleaning and reapply Petrolatum ointment (Vaseline). From this point forward, the face should be cleansed with a vinegar and water solution. Mix two tablespoons of white vinegar with one quart of normal saline in a pan and bring to a boil, then cool the mixture in the refrigerator. Pour one cup of this solution in a bowl and saturate several pieces of 4x4 gauze. Use the gauze to dab face to clean it—do not wipe. Blot dry with a paper towel and apply thin layer of Petrolatum ointment (Vaseline).

#### Day 2 to 4:

On the second day you may begin to shower. Set the shower head on the finest spray with low water pressure and you may allow this spray to wash your face of any film or peeling skin. You may wash your hair with a gentle shampoo (baby shampoo) and use your normal body soap everywhere except for the treated areas of your face. After the shower, blot your face dry and then cleanse your face with the vinegar solution. The face should remain moist so reapply the Petrolatum ointment (Vaseline) as needed.

No scaling or scabbing should occur. If it does, increase the ointment application. Do not attempt to remove scabs. Let them wash away with showers and vinegar solution cleansing.

Continue your oral hygiene as usual. If the resurfaced areas around the mouth are sore, you can consider using a smaller sized or “baby” toothbrush to avoid stretching the lips and cheeks. Also, a 50:50 solution of hydrogen peroxide and water can be gargled for 30 seconds. Do not swallow this solution—spit it out.

#### Second week:

The second week after surgery, most patients are having little or no discomfort and the pinkness is fading. Continue cleansing you face, but now with just mild soap—the vinegar solution is no longer needed. Continue to apply petrolatum, but a thinner coat may be used to keep skin moist.

#### Third week:

You may begin using an electric razor to shave, but not a conventional razor because it can damage new skin. You should start applying a SPF-45 sunscreen and use a facial moisturizer every day. Any facial moisturizer may be used such as Oil of Olay or Noxema. Wear a wide-brimmed hat whenever going outdoors and avoid direct sunlight for six months.

#### Sixth week:

Restart Retin A every day and use continually for the rest of your life. Your doctor will instruct you on a new dosing schedule—probably starting to use Retin A once or twice a week. You will not restart the hydroquinone cream. You may resume shaving with a conventional razor if you desire.

#### Surveillance:

Monitor your facial skin at regular intervals to note any changes. Look for areas of skin that continually scale, do not heal, enlarge, or change color. Bring these areas to the attention of your doctor when you see him.