

## CHEMICAL PEEL INSTRUCTIONS

### PREOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please DO NOT wear any make-up on the day of the chemical peel. Make sure you wash your face with soap and water thoroughly the evening, and multiple times the same day before the peeling.
2. Do not wear any earrings.
3. **If you have ever had fever blisters or cold sores**, these may develop approximately four to five days after the peeling procedure. It is very important that you notify Dr. Gentile of this problem, so that you can be started on Zovirax (acyclovir) or other antiviral medication one week before the peeling.
4. Please stop all hormone medications before and after the peel (for at least 6 weeks) since they can cause hyperpigmentation (darkening of the skin).
5. If you are having a phenol peel and you have a history of cardiac, renal or liver disease you must be evaluated and cleared for the peel by your physician.

### POSTOPERATIVE INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **DISCOMFORT.** Following the application of the peeling solution, there is a stinging pain that last for a few seconds. It then temporarily disappears, but can return within several minutes. When it returns, it can persist up to six to eight hours. A fan will help relieve it, as well as cold compresses, which can be made out of 4 x 4s placed in an icebox. These ice compresses should be discontinued after the pain subsides and can only be used for the first 8 hours after a peel as they can stick to your skin.
2. **SWELLING.** You can expect to have a moderate to severe amount of swelling in the areas treated. This will be especially true for the areas around the eyes and lips. Swelling reaches its peak by the second or third day and then subsides by the fifth or sixth day. You can help decrease the amount of swelling by keeping your head elevated about 30 degrees when reclining and staying up in a sitting position as much as possible.
3. **SKIN APPEARANCE AND CARE.** Within 24 to 36 hours, the peeled areas resemble a deep sunburn or blister, and you may notice yellow fluid oozing from the skin. This is normal because as the superficial layers of skin begin to separate from the deeper layers, serum (a body fluid) accumulates between them and the peeled regions are converted to a water blister. You may shower the next day following the procedure, using tap water at body temperature. This is most easily accomplished by standing in the shower. Do not use a wash cloth or any soap. You should shower approximately six times per day or more and following each washing, you should apply Crisco vegetable shortening (liquid only). This prevents dryness and crusting and promotes healing. It is very important for you to avoid sun exposure and to use sunscreen in combination with sunblocks (Zinc and Titanium Oxide) for the first six months. It simply takes time for the new skin to build up a natural resistance to sun and wind. Also, it is important never to scratch or to pick at crusts, since it can cause bleeding, and worse, can cause scarring.
4. **OTHER FACTS.**
  - a. Some skins are more favorable than others. Fair complexions tend to do better than dark ones.
  - b. Peeling alone is not indicated for treatment of sagging tissues. Although the new skin has better elasticity, correction of sagging skin requires surgery and it is generally performed first.
  - c. One should not take any female hormones or birth control pills for approximately six months after a peel because they can cause discoloration of your skin.
  - d. The new skin will be much like the skin of a newborn, in that it will take time for it to toughen and be able to tolerate direct sunlight and certain skin care products. Because of this new skin, the texture and color will be somewhat different from what has not been peeled. Make-up can generally camouflage any contrast. Furthermore, peeling will not reduce the size of pores. A pore is the surface opening of an oil gland or hair follicle. Attempts to reduce its size may lead to development of a pimple.
  - e. Again, you should never pick at crust or pieces of skin that do not loosen easily or scratch areas that are pruritic (that itch) as this can cause permanent scarring. You should always use Crisco shortening (liquid only), liberally, but avoid getting it in the eyes.
  - f. You should never comb your hair, wear a shower cap, wig, or hairpiece that contacts any area that has been peeled, as this might result in delayed healing or scarring formation.
  - g. During the first and second days, the delicate new skin is undergoing a toughening up process. About the 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> day, most of the crusting should have disappeared and the new skin will appear intensely pink. (The lower lid region and the lip are usually the last areas for crusting to disappear.) At this stage, the Crisco shortening (liquid only) should be applied more sparingly, but gently rubbed in, as one would use

- any other moisturizing cream. Except when following these instructions, you should keep the finger or tissues away from the face. Fingertips contain bacteria and oils and have been in contact with soaps, nail care products and other materials that might irritate the delicate new skin.
- h. After the 14<sup>th</sup> day, you should be able to use make-up over the peeled areas. Specific recommendations regarding make-ups will be made at the time of your follow-up visit. In general, water-based make-ups are more easily removed and therefore, recommended for the first few days. Make-up is never applied to unhealed areas. Hypoallergenic products are advisable at least in the beginning. The intense pink color usually fades rapidly after the second week, or third, but some pink color will remain up to six to eight weeks continually decreasing intensity.
  - i. Occasionally, white small cysts may appear in the treated areas. They are stopped up oil glands and usually disappear in two to three weeks without specific treatment.
  - j. Early in the healing process, exposure to heat, cold, wind, or emotional upset will cause the skin to temporarily become intensely pink. This is due to increased blood flow or blushing. After about three to four months, the phenomenon should disappear.
5. **RESUMING ACTIVITIES.**
- A. **Wearing eyeglasses.** If the area around the nose has been peeled, one should wait at least four weeks before wearing eyeglasses. The pressure of glasses resting on the skin of the nose should be avoided until Dr. Gentile further instructs you.
  - B. **Sun exposure.** You should try to avoid either direct or reflected rays of the sun for at least eight weeks, since discoloration (usually hyper-pigmentation) of the peeled areas may result if the new delicate skin is exposed too early. This means that sunning oneself (golfing, fishing, tennis, or similar activities as driving in a car for long periods of time) during the sunny part of the day should be avoided during the initial eight-week period. The peeled areas should be protected for six months by large-brimmed hats and sunscreen protection with an SPF of 65 or above in combination with Titanium and Zinc Oxide.
6. **PROBLEMS.** If you have any problems or concerns following a peel, please call our office at **(361) 881-9999**. When the office is closed, a voice mail system will relay your message and your call will be returned shortly. Please be sure to leave your name and a telephone number where you can be reached. I will be glad to see you at any time. Questions can be answered over the telephone and we will be glad to do that, as well.

I acknowledge that Dr. Gentile has discussed chemical peel with me and has answered all my questions to my satisfaction including, but not limited to, expected results, scarring and permanent discoloration changes.

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Patient Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date