

Post Operative Instructions

Laser Resurfacing

The goal is to make your surgical experience and recovery as comfortable as possible. Please call us with any questions or concerns.

Please review the following recommendations for post procedure care and the other written and verbal information you have received from your doctor. You play an active and essential role in your recovery process. It is our pleasure to assist you and care for you at any time.

Medications:

- Valtrex 500 mg every 12 hours – This prevents shingles or herpes in the areas treated by the laser. You will start taking this medication 2 days prior to your procedure.
- Antibiotic – This prevents cellulitis or cutaneous infections
- Narcotic – This is the main pain medication, but can be used with Tylenol.
- Mupirocin 2% - This will be applied to your face to help the healing process, and minimize infection.

Swelling/Discoloration:

After this type of procedure, your face is usually swollen and may show noticeable redness. Most swelling usually resolves quickly over 5-7 days (more slowly if you have had prior surgery or trauma on our face), while the discoloration will diminish more gradually over 10-14 days. You may notice that one side of your will be slightly more or less swollen than the other – this is normal and is not a cause of concern.

What to Expect:

The feeling of tightness and burning is normal. The first 7 days your skin will be bright red, but around the second week will turn more of a pink color. The discoloration will slowly and gradually diminish to its normal color over 6-8 weeks after your laser treatment.

The following are some recommendations directed at relieving discomfort and speeding the recovery process:

1. REST IN BED OR A CHAIR for the first 7 days following your procedure. Be sure to keep your head elevated at a minimum of 45 degrees.
2. AVOID HITTING OR BUMPING YOUR FACE. It is wise not to pick up small children.
3. APPLY MUPIROCIN 2%. As often as possible for the first 7 days after your procedure. At a minimum 6 times per day to keep your face protected.

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4. AVOID BENDING, STRAINING, HEAVY LIFTING for 72 hours following surgery. In addition to aggravating swelling, these activities may elevate blood pressure and start bleeding.
5. AVOID EXCESSIVE SMILING, CHEWING, TALKING OR YAWNING for 72 hours.
6. AVOID PHYSICAL EXERCISE for 72 hours.
7. DO NOT SMOKE AND AVOID ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION for 6 weeks after surgery. Both of these activities can significantly slow the healing process and may cause infection.
8. REPORT ANY SUDDEN SWELLING OR INCREASED DISCOLORATION of your skin to Dr. Calva immediately.
9. SLEEP IN AN UPRIGHT POSITION (preferably on your back) by elevating the head of the bed and using extra pillows for at least 7 days following your procedure.
10. AVOID STRAINING IN THE BATHROOM. If you need a laxative, we recommend Docusate (your pharmacist will give it to you without a prescription).
11. Proper diet, plenty of water and walking are strongly recommended to avoid constipation.

Pain:

As mentioned above, there is burning associated with your procedure. You may experience a dull ach and tightness in your face, but it is very unusual to have significant, sharp pain. If the pain medication does not provide sufficient relief from the discomfort associated with your procedure, take extra strength Tylenol according to package directions. Under no circumstances should ASPIRIN, MOTRIN, ALEVE, ETC. and/or any medications containing aspirin or salicylates be taken. If you have increasing pain or any “burning” of the eyelids or face, please inform Dr. Calva immediately.

Temperature:

Generally, the body temperature does not rise much above 100 degrees following a surgical procedure. A rise in temperature is an appropriate part of the healing process. You should check your temperature by mouth three times per day. If you have a persistent fever above 101.5 degrees that is not relieved by Tylenol, call our office.

Diet:

You may advance to a regular diet as tolerated immediately after your procedure. You might find that using a straw and sticking with a liquid diet for a day or two might be helpful. If you have persistent nausea stick to a bland diet until it subsides. Avoid foods that can cause a lot of gas. This can cause abdominal distention and undue discomfort and likely nausea. Small frequent meals are best. Drink plenty of fluids. You may take any over the counter laxative as needed.

Some suggestions:

1. Drink a lot of water- 8 glasses a day!

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2. Drink warm liquids (tea or coffee).
3. Prune juice for constipation.
4. If severely constipated use Colace (2 tabs in a.m. and p.m. taken with one glass of warm water), and fleet enemas (regular or oil retention) as a last resort.

Daily wound care:

For the first 7 days you will be placing Mupirocin 2% at least 6 times per day on your face to protect the wounds. On week two, Dr. Calva will ask you to start using a moisturizer cream of your choice, and you should apply it again 6 times per day for another 7 days. If you are experiencing significant itching, you may take over the counter Benadryl 25 mg as every 6 hours as needed.

Resuming Activities:

1. WEARING GLASSES AND CONTACT LENSES. Eyeglasses may be worn, as well as contact lenses.
2. PERSONAL GROOMING. In order to improve and speed wound healing, we recommend the following:
 - You may SHOWER starting 48 hours after your procedure
 - You may use a BLOW DRYER on cold setting
 - You may have your HAIR WASHED AT A SALON
 - You may NOT USE FACIAL MAKEUP until 4 weeks from your procedure
3. HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES. On the day of your procedure, you are encouraged to be up and around the house with your usual activities except those specifically outlined previously (no bending, no heavy lifting, etc). No strenuous activity for 72 hours.
4. AVOID EXERCISE for 72 hours following your procedure.
5. RETURNING TO WORK/SCHOOL AND RESUMING SOCIAL ACTIVITIES. When you return to work/school depends on the amount of physical activity and public contact your job involves and also the amount of swelling and discoloration you develop; the average person is ready to return to work/school or go out socially in about 10-14 days following their procedure.

Scars:

During the first week following your procedure, your face will go through a series of stages that are similar to a superficial burn. The first week you will experience swelling and reddening, as this subsides, your face becomes more and more pink, until virtually the color is the same as your usual skin again. This is the normal maturity process of your facial skin after a laser treatment. The entire process takes 6-8 weeks, but it is important to protect your incision from sun at all times for a period of one year. Use both hats and sun block (SPF 50) at all times. Dr. Calva will tell you when it is okay to start using sun block; typically you can start using it after week 2 from your procedure in conjunction with your facial moisturizer.

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Your post procedure office visit:

You will be seen at our office following your procedure to make sure there are no complications generally at 1 week AFTER YOUR PROCEDURE. You will generally be asked to return to the office for follow-up evaluation at 3 weeks, 3 months, and 9 months to make sure everything progresses smoothly. Please arrange your schedule to accommodate these appointments, which we urge you to make immediately following surgery.

Summary:

- Do not be discouraged by swelling and discoloration. These conditions are a normal part of your procedure and will subside within 6-8 weeks.
- Call Dr. Calva if you experience:
 - Sudden swelling noticeably different from one side of the face compared to the other or increased discoloration.
 - Increase in facial pain or any “burning” of the eyelids
 - Any progressive or one-sided decrease in vision.
 - Persistent temperature above 101.5 degrees that is not relieved by Tylenol.

Your recovery and ultimate result is very important to us. Please read this handout carefully and keep it readily accessible as a reference after your surgery

If you have ANY questions or problems not addressed in this handout, please do not hesitate to contact us at our office at (305) 203-3938 during the day, after normal business hours or on weekends. Dr. Daniel Calva’s cell phone is (305) 814-9582.

- After business hours or weekends – (305) 203-3938
- Dr. Dan Calva’s Cell Phone – (305) 814-9582