

# Aftercare Information

## CO<sub>2</sub>RE Resurfacing

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Making you, more you

This information has been provided to enhance your understanding of procedures or treatments related to CO<sub>2</sub>RE resurfacing prior to an initial consultation with a specialist consultant plastic surgeon. Many clients find it useful to note down questions they have thought of whilst reading this treatment guide. We recommend that read this advice and if you are unsure about anything then please do not hesitate to contact us.

General enquiries: 01892 257357 (Mon - Fri, 9am - 5pm).

For out of hours emergencies and at weekends, please call 07753 211771.

We hope you enjoyed your treatment at Bella Vou Clinic. Your recovery and welfare is important to us, so we have provided aftercare instructions and possible side effects below. Please do contact the wonderful team at the clinic should you have any questions.

## Recovery & aftercare advice

- The first 48 hours:  
Swelling accompanied by a burning sensation usually develops over the first 24 hours. The burning sensation usually settles within 48 hours.
- The first 3 to 4 days:  
The face will feel tight and swollen, and there may also be weeping of yellow serous fluid for the first three to four days. Over the first few days crusts may develop. It is important to NOT remove them, as they will come away naturally leaving fresh new skin underneath.
- The first 4 to 6 days:  
It is normal to experience itching at this stage of recovery. It is not unusual to experience some degree of itching between four to six days following treatment. The CU3 cream supplied as part of your treatment will provide relief.
- 10 days after treatment:  
At this stage, the skin will have healed almost entirely with no further crusting. It is usually safe at this point to return to a simple skin care regime. The skin will remain pink and settle over the following weeks.

### Please Note:

- It is important to avoid picking or removing the skin flakes or crusts, they will shed naturally. Picking may cause scarring.
- Recovery time periods may vary according to the strength of treatment. The duration of crusting may be longer where the treatment is more aggressive.
- An aftercare pack containing Dermol facewash, CU3 cream and sterile gauze will be supplied after treatment.
- Avoid sun exposure at all times, wearing SPF and a wide-brimmed hat whenever practical.

### Skincare following treatment

Following the CO<sub>2</sub> laser treatment, it is important to follow the skincare routine set out below. The skin barrier has been temporarily impaired by the laser, therefore premature application of normal skincare products will cause inflammation, irritation, delay the healing process and may increase the risk of pigmentation problems and/or scarring.

- During the first 14 days:  
You are more susceptible to allergic dermatitis and contact irritation during this phase of healing.
- 10 days after treatment:  
It is important to use a sunscreen with SPF50 for the first six weeks to minimise your exposure to the sun at all times.

#### Morning skincare routine

- Wash the face in the morning with Dermol facewash and allow to air dry. Alternatively, you may gently pat dry with a clean face towel - do not rub.
- Apply CU3 cream to the face. This will protect the skin and stop it from drying out while the epidermal barrier is healing.
- Take any antibiotic or anti-viral medication according to clinical advice.

The CU3 cream may be used at any point during the day if the skin starts to itch or feel dry and tight. Do not allow the skin to become dry as this slows healing.

#### Evening skincare routine

Repeat steps 1 & 2 (and step 3 if you have been prescribed medication) before going to bed.

A follow-up appointment will be scheduled to see you at one week following treatment, but do not hesitate to contact us if you require assistance.

#### 6 weeks after treatment

As your skin will have healed by day 10, you will be able to return to work at this stage. Although the skin is pink, as though you have mild sunburn, this settles over the following 6 - 12 weeks. The skin is sensitive at this stage and will require ONLY MILD cleansers, moisturisers and make-up. Products containing acetyl alcohol, retinoids and alpha hydroxyl acids that can irritate the skin and delay healing, these should be avoided or minimised.

Sunscreen is also very important. High SPF30+ is ideal. Sunscreens that contain physical filters rather than chemical filters are preferred as they are less likely to irritate the skin. Very gentle cleansers and moisturisers are advised to minimise irritation. Avoid sun exposure, wearing your SPF50 and a wide brimmed hat when practical.

## Possible Side Effects

- **Pain**  
The sharp, burning sensation of each laser pulse may produce a moderate to severe amount of discomfort. Topical anaesthetics, anaesthetic injections, or intravenous sedation may be used to block the pain during the procedure. Oral pain medication may be prescribed for the postoperative period.
- **Prolonged skin redness**  
The laser-treated areas will initially appear bright red in colour. After the first few days, the redness can be camouflaged with opaque makeup. The redness will fade to pink over the following couple of weeks, and normal skin colour over the next couple of months.
- **Damage to natural skin texture (crust, blister, burn)**
- **Swelling and oozing**  
Areas most likely to swell are around the eyes and neck. A clear fluid may be present in the lasered areas and may create a crust (or scab) if the areas are not kept moist. Within about 2 days, you may appear to have an exaggerated tan with slight micro- crusting that may last as long as two weeks. It is recommended that a healing ointment be kept on the skin during this period.
- **Skin lightening (hypo-pigmentation)**  
Light spots can appear in an area of skin that has already received prior treatment or can be a delayed response to the laser surgery. The pale areas can darken or re-pigment in several months, but could be permanent.
- **Skin darkening (hyper-pigmentation)**  
'Tanning' of the skin can occur in the treated areas and will eventually fade within a few months. This reaction is more common in patients with olive or dark skin tones and can worsen if the laser-treated area is exposed to the sun.
- **Scarring**  
The risk of this complication is minimal, but it can occur whenever the skin's surface is disrupted. Strict adherence to all advised postoperative instructions will reduce the possibility of this occurrence.
- **Infection**  
A skin infection in the postoperative period can result. This risk is minimised by the appropriate use of antibiotics and good skin care, including frequent hand washing.
- **Allergic reaction**  
It is possible that an allergic reaction to an anaesthetic, topical cream or oral medication can occur.
- **Ectropion**  
In rare instances, a downward pull of the eyelids can result after periorbital laser resurfacing.

### Transient Side Effects

- Epidermal bronzing.
- Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV).
- Acne flares.
- Petechia (tiny purple, red or brown spots caused by bleeding under the skin).

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, queries or concerns. For out of hours emergencies and at weekends please call 07753 211771.

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