



MEDICAL + AESTHETIC DERMATOLOGY

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Vascular Laser Pre-Treatment Instructions

What you should know prior to Vascular Laser Treatment

You have been diagnosed with a vascular lesion (spider vein, rosacea, telangiectasia, photodamage, hemangioma, or port-wine stain) that is made up of a network of blood vessels. These vessels are close to the skin surface, causing your skin to be colored pink, red or purple. Several treatments, including surgery and skin grafting, sclerotherapy injections, electrosurgery, cryosurgery, and X-rays have been used to treat these types of lesions, with variable results. The following factors should be considered in your decision to undergo laser treatment.

Most lesions may need only 1 to 4 laser treatments, whereas port-wine stains require an average of 10 to 20 treatments or more for significant lightening.

The power of the laser must be individualized for each patient and repeated treatments over the same skin area every 6 to 8 weeks may be required.

The laser treatment is usually well tolerated. Laser safety is ensured by having you close your eyes and wear specially designed protective goggles during the procedure. Pulses of light are delivered via a handpiece that is held very close to the skin. With each pulse of light delivered, the machine makes a popping sound, and the skin feels as though it has been snapped by a rubber band. Patients have a tendency to flinch with the first pulse, more from being startled than from pain. Subsequent pulses are more readily tolerated. An injection or anesthetic cream can sometimes be used to block the discomfort if desired.

Occasionally, temporary discoloration may occur following treatment and persist for several months. It is important to avoid prolonged sunlight exposure and wear sunblock during this time. Be sure to take the postoperative course into consideration if you have any important upcoming social events. Results of laser treatment may take up to 6 weeks to be seen.

All surgical procedures carry some degree of risk, and laser surgery is no exception. Although side effects from this procedure are minimal, a small risk of the following can occur: skin lightening (hypopigmentation), skin darkening (hyperpigmentation), mottled discoloration, infection, pain, swelling, activation of cold sores, allergic reaction to ointment or other contactant, scarring, and lesion persistence despite treatment. Unfortunately, no assurances or guarantees can be given regarding an individual's response to laser therapy.

Please let us know during the initial consultation if you have a history of seizures, cold sores or fever blisters or if you have used Accutane within the last 12 months.



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Vascular Laser Post-Treatment Care

What to do after Vascular Laser Treatment

- After treatment, the area may be discolored and swollen. Following this, a blister and/or crust may form which can last 7-14 days. The treated area is extremely delicate and must be handled with care during this time. Your response to treatment may not be apparent for 4 to 6 weeks. At that time, further treatment may be performed to try to obtain additional improvement.
- To prevent or reduce swelling and discomfort, cool water compresses may be applied to the area. These may be applied for 10 minutes of every hour. Do not apply ice directly to the treated area,
- If you feel any discomfort (typically this does not last more than 6 hours), use acetaminophen (Tylenol).
- Use a mild, nonirritating soap such Cetaphil to gently cleanse the treated areas. If a blister or crust has formed, apply Vaseline or Aquaphor healing ointment to the treated area. If the wound is oozing, apply a bandage (nonstick pad with tape); otherwise you may leave it open to the air. Repeat this procedure twice daily.
- Showers are permitted but prolonged hot baths/showers are not advised for 1-2 weeks. Gently pat the treated area dry with a soft cloth. Do not rub a towel or washcloth because the area is extremely delicate while healing.
- Do not rub, scratch or pick the treated area. If a crust develops, let the crust fall off on its own.
- Makeup and moisturizers may be applied as usual if crusting is not present. Otherwise, wait until the crusting has come off. If makeup is applied to cover up the bruising, do not use makeup remover or cleanse harshly while the skin is still healing as this may injure or abrade the treated area. Instead, let the makeup wear off on its own.
- Avoid sunlight exposure to the treated areas. Use a sunscreen with SPF30 or higher for several months following treatment to avoid prolonged redness or pigmentary changes.
- Avoid swimming and contact sports while the skin is healing.