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CHEMICAL PEEL PRE-OP INSTRUCTIONS

Chemical peeling involves the application of an agent to the skin that causes it to separate and peel off after a few days. It will help REDUCE the signs of sun damage (fine lines, freckles and uneven skin tone) or acne marks. Chemical peels typically do not go deep enough to work on most wrinkles-those are better addressed with a laser peel or possibly filler or botulinum toxin injections. No procedure can guarantee removal of ALL blemishes or damage acquired by years of sun exposure.

The exact chemical and strength used will be determined by Dr. Baucom/Dr. Mina, and will be based on the extent of sun damage present, your skin type, and your goals for the procedure.

Chemical peels are not covered by most medical insurance plans because they are performed for cosmetic reasons. Nevertheless, chemical peels do offer medical benefit, as a single peel has been shown to reduce the formation of skin cancer by almost 40% for the 5 years following the treatment.

BEFORE THE PEEL:

- **SUNSCREEN:** plan on using sunscreen daily; there is no point in trying to reverse/reduce sun damage if you are still trying to get tan.
- **ANTIVIRAL MEDICATION:** If you have a history of cold sores or fever blisters, you will start an antiviral medication the evening prior to or the morning of the procedure, and continue it for up to one week.
- **Tretinoin:** Most patients will benefit from using tretinoin (the active agent in Retin-A and Renova) for a few weeks before the peel, as it will speed up healing. This will be continued after the area has healed to promote new collagen formation. Not everyone needs this, and patients with very sensitive skin often skip this.
- **BLEACHING AGENT:** (Hydro-Q or other brand) will be used in some patients to maintain an even skin tone following the peel. Patients who are naturally very fair skinned often will be able to skip this.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE PEEL:

- **About an hour before the peel:** we will apply a thin layer of the anesthetic cream and let you read magazines. This will reduce the stinging associated with the procedure
- **Before the procedure:** please arrive wearing no makeup or moisturizer, or arrive 10-15 minutes early to thoroughly remove these in the restroom.
- **Anxiety:** can be reduced with some Valium given before the procedure, but then you will not be allowed to drive yourself home. If you feel that you will be very anxious, please have someone come with you who can drive you home.
- **Pain:** application of the peeling agent causes a fairly intense stinging that does not last long. As soon as the treated area "frosts" (it looks like a light white or pink glaze over the skin), cold wet compresses are applied to the area and left in place for several minutes. The stinging quickly decreases in intensity; most patients describe it as a sunburn like sensation. Tylenol or Advil can be taken if necessary.

WHAT WILL I LOOK LIKE?

At first, the pink frost will fade to a mild to moderate redness very similar to a sunburn. This 'sunburn' period will last for about one day, and you are usually reasonably presentable. The next stage is the damaged skin drying and separating, not very pretty. Your skin will take on a brown or bronze look and feel fairly dry and tight. As you peel off the old, sun damaged skin, the fresh new pink skin will be revealed underneath. This is the period (usually a day or two) when your skin looks really blotchy and uneven. Do not pull the peeling skin off your face as this may cause scarring. Instead, liberally apply Vaseline or Aquaphor to your skin. After the main peeling takes place, your skin will be fresh and somewhat pink, and you may resume make-up and cosmetics. Final fading of the pinkness will take a few weeks.

*** IN CASE OF EMERGENCY ***

Call (404) 844-0496 for instructions on contacting Dr. Baucom or Dr. Mina