

Chemical Peel

A chemical peel may help some people who have sun damage (blotchy color changes, scaly areas, spider veins, “age/liver” spots) on their face. This procedure can be done as an outpatient.

In a chemical peel, a special acid is rubbed on your face. You will feel a burning pain when the acid is put on your skin. This pain will last for a few minutes. The skin does not begin to peel right away. New skin will replace the peeled skin within seven to ten days. The new skin will not look normal for at least two weeks. Some redness may last for a few months.

Getting Ready for a Chemical Peel

Be sure to tell your doctor:

- What medications you take; s/he will tell you if you should take them the day of the peel
- If you are allergic to any medications
- If you have ever had problems with surgery
- If you have a history of cold sores

Wash your hair the night before the chemical peel. Do not use a cream rinse, gel, mousse, or hairspray.

Wash your face the night before and the morning of the chemical peel. Do not use any makeup or creams on your face the morning of the peel.

Follow your regular diet.

Do not wear clothing that must be pulled over your head. Ask a friend or relative to drive you home after the peel. You may have a dressing (bandages) on your face after the peel, though this is usually not needed.

After the Chemical Peel

You may feel some burning for a few hours after the peel. You may take Tylenol, as needed, one to two tablets every four hours.

Your skin may begin to peel in about three days. When your skin starts to peel you may notice a clear fluid in the treated areas. This is a normal part of healing.

You may have some swelling of the treated skin and the skin around your eyes. This is normal, but let us know if it becomes uncomfortable.

Cleaning the Skin

You will need to keep your face clean when the skin begins to peel. Twenty-four hours after your surgery you should clean the skin carefully, using soap and water. You can use hydrogen peroxide to remove any crust that forms. The hydrogen peroxide can be diluted (use half hydrogen peroxide and half tap water) if it irritates your skin when used at full strength. You can buy hydrogen peroxide at a drugstore. You may also use wet soaks to remove crusts. Soak the crusted area with a very wet washcloth for 10 minutes. Then gently remove the crusts.

Clean your skin and apply a thin coat of _____ ointment three times a day. This will keep you from forming a scab. A scab (crust) may make your skin heal more slowly and may keep it from healing, as it should. Do not pull or pick it off. Keep cleaning your skin with soap and water and using _____ until new skin completely covers the treated area. **Do not** rub, scratch, or pick at your skin for any reason; this may cause scarring.

Your new skin may be pink for about three months. Keep the new skin out of the sun. It may burn easily. Use a sunscreen with a SPF (sun protection factor) of 15 or higher. Wear a hat to protect your skin from the sun.

Signs of Infection

Your skin may feel tight and itch while it heals. This is normal. Remember, **do not** rub, scratch, or pick your skin. If you notice any signs of infection:

- Pus filled discharge
- Fever
- Redness
- Swelling
- Cold sores

Call the Dermatology Clinic at (612) 467-5524. Before 8:00 a.m., after 4:30 p.m., and on weekends and holidays call Urgent Care at 1-866-687-7382 (1-866-NURSEVA).

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