

INFORMED CONSENT

CO₂ LASER SKIN RESURFACING

This document explains laser skin resurfacing, its risks, and the alternatives to it. Please read it carefully, initial each page, and ask your surgeon about anything that is unclear before you sign.

THE PROCEDURE

Laser energy removes damaged outer layers of skin and stimulates new collagen, improving wrinkles, sun damage, scars, and certain skin lesions. Treatment may be performed on its own or at the time of other surgery. A skin care program before and after treatment can improve your result.

ALTERNATIVES

You may choose not to have the procedure. Chemical peels, dermabrasion, or excisional surgery may be substituted. Each alternative carries its own risks and potential complications.

RISKS OF LASER RESURFACING

Most patients do not experience complications, but every procedure carries risk. Discuss any of the following with your surgeon before proceeding.

- ◆ **Infection.** Bacterial, fungal, and viral infections can occur. Herpes simplex (cold sore) outbreaks around the mouth are the most common, and can happen even with no history of them. Antiviral medication must be taken before and after treatment. Infection may require antibiotics or further treatment.
- ◆ **Color change.** Redness usually lasts 1–3 months and occasionally 6. Skin may heal lighter or darker than the surrounding area, and a visible line can form where treated and untreated skin meet. These changes are occasionally permanent.
- ◆ **Burns.** Laser energy produces heat and can burn skin or injure the eyes. Burns are rare and may require additional treatment.
- ◆ **Fire.** Drapes, tubing, hair, clothing, and supplemental oxygen can be ignited by laser energy. Protective measures are used throughout the procedure.
- ◆ **Visible patterns and distortion.** Resurfacing can leave visible treatment patterns in the skin, or alter the appearance of the eyelids, mouth, and other landmarks. Neither is predictable, and further treatment including surgery may be necessary.
- ◆ **Scarring from unapproved products.** Applying any cream, ointment, serum, acid, retinoid, or scrub to healing skin without our approval can cause burning, infection, prolonged redness, and permanent scarring. Use only the products we provide during recovery.
- ◆ **Previously damaged skin.** Skin treated in the past with chemical peels or dermabrasion, or damaged by burns, electrolysis, or radiation therapy, may heal abnormally or slowly. Tell your surgeon if you have had any of these.
- ◆ **Accutane (isotretinoin).** This drug impairs the skin's ability to heal for a period after you stop taking it. If you have ever taken Accutane, tell your surgeon — treatment may need to be delayed.
- ◆ **Unsatisfactory result.** There is no guarantee. You may be dissatisfied with the color, texture, or degree of improvement, and additional treatment may be necessary at your expense.
- ◆ **Unknown risks.** Additional risk factors may be identified in the future. The combined effect of resurfacing performed with skin-tightening surgery is not fully known and may include skin slough, delayed healing, and a poor outcome.



TELL US BEFORE TREATMENT

- ◆ Every medication and supplement you take. Aspirin, ibuprofen, and similar drugs increase bleeding and should be stopped ten days before and after treatment. Never stop a prescribed blood thinner such as Plavix on your own — talk to the prescribing physician first.
- ◆ Any history of cold sores, Accutane use, prior skin treatments, or slow healing.
- ◆ Recent sun exposure or tanning, indoors or out. Tanned skin raises the risk of scarring, color change, and poor healing, and treatment may need to be postponed. Sunscreen and clothing do not eliminate this.
- ◆ If you are pregnant or may be. Antibiotics can neutralize birth control pills, allowing pregnancy.

AFTER YOUR TREATMENT

- ◆ **Avoid the sun for 6–8 weeks.** Healing skin burns easily and sun exposure during this period is the most common cause of permanent darkening, blotchiness, and a poor result. Stay out of direct sun, wear a wide-brimmed hat, and use a broad-spectrum sunscreen daily once your skin has finished peeling. No tanning beds. Protect the treated skin from sun long-term.
- ◆ **Use only the products we give you.** Do not apply any cream, ointment, serum, acid, retinoid, scrub, or makeup to the treated area without clearing it with us first. Healing skin absorbs far more than normal skin, and products that are ordinarily harmless can cause burning, rash, infection, prolonged redness, or scarring.

SMOKING & NICOTINE

Nicotine in any form — cigarettes, vaping, chewing tobacco, patches, gum, lozenges — and second-hand smoke significantly raise the risk of poor healing, tissue death, scarring, and infection. I understand I should avoid all of them for at least four weeks before treatment and throughout recovery, that I must tell my surgeon if I use any nicotine product, and that using nicotine near the time of treatment may cause my surgeon to postpone or decline it.

AFTERCARE, COST & ADDITIONAL TREATMENT

Following your post-treatment instructions — activity, dressings, and sun protection — is essential to your result. It is not always possible to achieve the outcome you want in a single session, and secondary treatment may be necessary. Health insurance generally excludes cosmetic procedures and any complications arising from them.

The fee for this procedure does not include future costs for revision, optimization, or the treatment of complications. Those costs are your responsibility.

_____ I understand and accept this.

This document is not all-inclusive and does not define the standard of medical care. Your surgeon may give you additional information based on the facts of your case and the current state of medical knowledge.

I have read and understand this information, I have had the opportunity to ask questions and received satisfactory answers, and I consent to the procedure described above.

Patient or person authorized to sign for patient

Date

Witness signature

Date