

## Post-Laser Treatment Instructions for Brown Spots

Immediately after laser treatment the spots will look darker or possibly ashy-gray. Within 24 hrs some will start to look "angry": pink, tender, possible light blistering (like a curling iron burn). This usually lasts 3-10 days in most people. If there is blistering or scabbing, the healing will take longer.

Right after treatment, you can apply cold packs, aloe, or another non-stinging product. While the area is tender or raw, keep a layer of Aquaphor, Vaseline, or Bacitracin on it. We also sell Neocutis Aftercare as a medical grade protective cream option (contains growth factors). Washing with water and a very mild cleanser is ok, until there are no raw or open areas. Avoid hot tubs or soaking the skin while it is raw or open. If the areas are just darker, but not raw, you can start using your regular make-up. If you have scabbing, do not pick at it. If you have signs of infection like fever, drainage, or spreading redness, please try bacitracin then contact us or your PCP. Avoid harsh cleansers, exfoliants such as retinol, or peeling agents until spots are no longer tender. After that, exfoliating is fine if your skin tolerates it. The spots which turned darker after treatment will start to look like coffee grounds, then will flake off. Within about three weeks, the treated layers of skin will have shed. You can have another treatment after they have fully healed, usually 3-4 weeks.

### **CRITICAL!!!!**

**\*Do not get ANY sun exposure on the treated spots until they have healed COMPLETELY.**

**\*If an area stays pink as it is healing, you need to continue protecting it for as long as the pink coloring is there, which can be several more weeks in some people, especially those who had scabbing or blisters.**

**\*UV exposure can cause hyperpigmentation, that could potentially be worse than what you were treating in the first place!**

**\*Sunscreen alone is NOT enough; you need to cover the spots to block the sun with a hat, tight weave clothing, or a bandage.**

If your skin is prone to pigmentation, you can apply hydrocortisone to the irritated spots for up to two weeks. Long term we have some topical lightening options to help decrease your tendency to pigment.

After three weeks, the treated brown spots will be lighter, gone, have the pinkness of "new skin", or look unchanged. If they are gone, or lightened to a satisfying degree, you can just follow up as needed in the future. If some spots are lighter or unchanged, then we will increase the settings at your next treatment to get them even lighter. We have to balance the risk of harming your skin with the desire to treat as aggressively as desired. That is why most people will require more than one treatment to safely get the degree of lightening they want.

Your chronic sun protection habits will determine how long your results will last. It is not uncommon for cautious people to come in every few years to treat new spots they've acquired.