

What you need to know about chemical peels...

Talk to your doctor about what you would like from your chemical peel. Some people want just a more youthful appearance. Others are concerned about wrinkles or acne scarring. The depth of the peel will determine how dramatic the results will be. There are many different types of chemical agents used for peels. You and your doctor can decide which agent(s) will be best for you.

Chemical peels remove a layer of skin, which in turn stimulates the underlying dermis to produce a new layer of healthy skin. The result often makes the skin smoother and rids the skin of tiny imperfections. It also increases the collagen in the skin, giving the face a brighter, more youthful appearance. Chemical peels can be performed anywhere on the body.

Doing a chemical peel carries some risk. Adverse events are usually self-limited and resolve with little to no intervention. These include discoloration, hyperpigmentation, and redness. If this occurs, we can provide creams to reverse this. Other potential complications include scarring, but it is rarely seen and is associated with the deeper peels. The peels that we use at New Smyrna Wellness Center have a low side-effect profile.

Your chemical peel will take some time to heal. Make sure you have some time to devote to the recovery process. If you have an important engagement that would make you feel self-conscious about your face as it heals, it is better to post-pone your chemical peel.

What can I expect?

Your skin will be prepped with cleansing agents prior to the chemical peel application. The chemical peel is wiped on by the clinician to achieve a smooth, even distribution. Depending on which chemical is used, you may feel anything from a tingling sensation all the way to an intense burning sensation. This feeling is transient and subsides in about a minute. Your physician will work quickly to minimize the burning, but may reapply the solution in certain areas, especially “problem” areas. Once your application is finished, an antibiotic ointment will be placed on your face. Your face will still feel warm and tight. It is important that you follow your post-procedure instructions.

How long will it take to heal?

Everyone heals differently. The healing process is dependent on many factors such as age, skin tone, nutrition, and aftercare. It also varies depending on the depth of the peel, which is determined by the agent(s) used. For a superficial (light) peel, healing can take 2-7 days. For medium peels, it can take 7-14 days. For the medium depth peels, you can expect a couple of days of redness, followed by a couple of days of peeling, and a few days of resolving redness.

What should I do/not do before my peel?

Do not wear any make-up or lotion on the day of your peel. Wash your skin with a gentle cleanser prior to coming to your appointment. Bring an umbrella with you to protect your skin from the sun. You may also want to make sure you have a fan at home, which will sooth your face.

What should I do/not do after my peel?

- Take 1000mg vitamin C twice daily, and take a vitamin B complex and vitamin A everyday.
- Eat well while you are healing, making sure to get plenty protein as your new skin is forming.
- Drink LOTS of water. Having a chemical peel will dehydrate you, so be sure to stay well-hydrated.
- Use a good quality moisturizer at least 3 times a day.
- You can use triple antibiotic ointment with pain reliever.
- You may also use hydrocortisone cream 1% if your skin is very red and painful on the first day.
- DO NOT PICK AT YOUR SKIN.
- DO NOT PEEL OR RUB OFF THE DEAD SKIN.
- IF YOU PICK AT YOUR SKIN, you will regret it. It will result in an increased area of redness that will last for weeks. It can also lead to **scarring**. Your face will itch, resist the temptation!
- Stay out of the sun. Apply sunscreen (at least 30 spf) every morning and reapply as needed.
- You may take warm showers to sooth your face.
- Wash with a mild cleanser, such as Cetaphil.
- Use zinc oxide (aka “plain diaper cream”) on areas that are raw and/or red. Zinc is very good for the skin.
- You may take ibuprofen (“Motrin”) or Tylenol as needed for pain. If you feel as though your face is swollen and red, take 600mg of ibuprofen every 6 hours, which will help with the inflammation.

Call our office if you have any questions. Our staff will be happy to assist you.