

## Planning for a Chemical Peel

In some states, no medical degree is required to perform a chemical peel - even the strongest phenol peels. Many states have laws that permit non-physicians to administer certain peel solutions, but regulate the strengths, which they are permitted to apply.

It is very important that your physician has adequate training and experience in skin resurfacing. Dr. Alaiti may offer you a choice of peel techniques or suggest a combination of peels to obtain the best result for you. At our office, all chemical peels are performed by Dr. Alaiti.

During your initial consultation, it is important that you discuss your expectations with Dr. Alaiti. Don't hesitate to ask any questions or express any concerns that you may have. Expect Dr. Alaiti will explain the planned procedure in detail, including its risks and benefits, the recovery period and the costs. If you have a history of herpes, you should inform Dr. Alaiti prior to the procedure.

## Preparing For Your Chemical Peel

Dr. Alaiti will instruct you on how to prepare for your peel treatment.

Retin A (tretinoin) - a prescription medication derived from Vitamin A-, is used to pre-treat the skin. This allows the TCA solution to penetrate more deeply and evenly. An AHA cream may be used as well. Hydroquinone, a bleaching agent, is sometimes used in conjunction with Retin-A or AHA pre-treatment, especially if you have blotchy skin areas or pigmentation problems. You may have to spend a month or more in the pre-treatment phase before Dr. Alaiti will schedule your actual peel. Dr. Alaiti may also recommend Botox® injections before the TCA peel to improve the post peel result.

You will need to arrange for someone to drive you home and help you out for a day or two if you are having a deeper TCA peel. You probably won't need any extra assistance if you're having an AHA peel or superficial TCA peel.

## Where Your Peel Will Be Performed

Chemical peels are safely performed in our AAAHC accredited office-based surgical facility (outpatient surgical center).

## Types of Anesthesia

Anesthesia isn't required for lighter TCA peels; however, oral or intravenous sedation may be used before and during the procedure to relax you and keep you comfortable.

No anesthesia is needed for AHA peels since they cause only a slight stinging sensation during application.

## The Peel

AHA peels/treatments: Dr. Alaiti will apply the AHA solution to your cleansed facial skin, a process that usually takes no more than 10 minutes. No "after-peel" ointment or covering is required. Depending on the strength of the peel, periodic treatments may be necessary until the desired effects are achieved.

For some patients, the application of an AHA-based face wash or cream once or twice a day at home will be sufficient to accomplish the desired goal. Dr. Alaiti may add Retin-A or a bleaching agent to your at-home treatment schedule. After several weeks of at-home use, Dr. Alaiti will examine your skin to determine if your regimen needs adjustment.

TCA peels: Typically, the skin is first thoroughly cleansed. Then, Dr. Alaiti will carefully apply the TCA solution. You will feel a stinging sensation as the peel solution is applied, but this feeling will quickly pass.

A full-face TCA peel usually takes no more than 15-30 minutes. Two or more TCA peels may be needed to obtain the desired result, and those may be spaced out over several months. Mild TCA peels may be repeated as often as every month.

## After Your Treatment

After an AHA peel, it is common to experience some temporary flaking or scaling, redness and dryness of the skin. However, these conditions will disappear as the skin adjusts to treatment.

After a TCA peel, a crust or scab will form on the treated area. To help your face heal properly, it is essential that you follow the specific post-operative instructions given by Dr. Alaiti.

A deep TCA peel may also cause significant swelling, depending on the strength of the peel used, and your face may become quite swollen. Your eyes may even be swollen shut temporarily. You may need someone to help care for you for a day or two. You may also be limited to a liquid diet and advised not to talk very much during the first few days of recovery.

## Getting Back to Normal

With an AHA peel, the temporary redness, flaking and dryness that you experience will not prevent you from working or engaging in your normal activities. A fresher and improved skin texture will result with continued AHA treatments. Remember, protecting your skin from the sun is also important following these mild acid peels. Ask Dr. Alaiti to recommend a sunblock or screen with adequate UVA and UVB protection and use it every day.

With a TCA peel, the moderate discomfort and swelling you may experience will subside within the first week. In about a week to ten days, your new skin will be apparent and you should be healed sufficiently to return to your normal activities. It is best to avoid sun exposure unless you are adequately protected. After a deep TCA peel, your face will be red after healing, and will gradually fade to a pinkish color over the following weeks to months. Following the healing stage, Dr. Alaiti will prescribe tretinoin, and bleaching creams to gloss your new skin. During this time, it is especially important that you use a sunblock or blotchy, irregular skin coloring may result. Your skin will be healed enough for you to wear makeup. (For makeup tips, ask Dr. Alaiti for the camouflage cosmetics.)

### Your New Look

Improvements from AHA peels may be very subtle at first. You may detect a healthier glow to your skin. With continued treatments, you will notice a general improvement in the texture of your skin. The results of an AHA peel are usually not as long-lasting as those of TCA peel.

After a TCA peel, your skin will be noticeably smoother and fresher looking. If you're planning a TCA peel, you can expect dramatic improvement in the surface of your skin - fewer fine wrinkles, fewer blemishes and more even-toned skin. Your results will be longer lasting than AHA peels, although not immune to the effects of aging and sun exposure.