



## Ablative Laser Resurfacing Instructions

### What laser resurfacing?

Laser resurfacing utilizes a laser light energy to improve the overall look and feel of your skin. Commonly treated conditions include fine lines, sunspots, and uneven skin tone and texture, keratosis. The Palomar Icon, is one of the strongest, safest, and most effective resurfacing lasers available with a great reputation and history. All lasers are not created equal and the Icon is an elite laser in a class of its own.

### How does laser resurfacing work?

The laser used in resurfacing has a very high attraction to the water in your skin. When the laser energy is applied, it ablates (vaporizes) a layer of skin to a depth controlled by our laser technician or physician. The high water attraction allows the laser to ablate blemishes, wrinkles and damaged skin very efficiently and safely to a precise depth. As your skin heals, a new layer of fresh, healthy skin replaces the old damaged skin. Additionally, laser resurfacing stimulates the formation of new collagen, leading to a stronger dermal foundation and noticeably firmer skin.

### How many treatments will I need?

Excellent results can be obtained in just one treatment; however the number of treatments needed may vary from patient to patient. Most patients look 5-10 years younger on the surface of their skin when they heal from this treatment. Gunn Dermatology will personalize a plan based on your specific needs and may choose to combine laser resurfacing with other aesthetic procedures and skincare products to further personalize your treatment. A sustained skincare program with repeat treatments can give you lifelong beautiful skin.

### What will happen during the treatment?

Your skin will be cleaned in the treatment area and your eyes will be protected with safety shields. Your provider will position the laser hand piece above the skin and will hold it in place as the computer-guided scanner moves the laser beam around the treatment area. Depending on the size of the area being treated, the procedure usually lasts around 20 minutes to an hour.

Depending on depth of treatment your provider will advise you on whether a topical numbing cream, and/or Ativan, and/or nerve blocks will be used.

When can I return to work?

Most patients feel comfortable enough to return to work within 3 to 4 days – an attribute that has given rise to the nickname “the weekend peel.” However, if you have a deeper treatment you may need 1-2 weeks for your recovery period. Depth of laser treatment determines downtime.

When will I notice a difference?

Because only the outer layer of skin is treated, most patients notice an obvious improvement in tone, texture and color evenness once the skin heals in approximately 5-7 days. With deeper laser resurfacing treatments there may be a longer recovery period of several weeks. Typically collagen production is happening for over one year after the treatment. It is like reverse aging.

### **Pre-Treatment Instructions**

1. SUN EXPOSURE IS TO BE AVOIDED FOR 4 WEEKS BEFORE AND 8 WEEKS AFTER TREATMENT. Sun exposure may cause problematic skin discoloration.
2. Do not use any self-tanning lotions in the month prior to treatment.
3. Avoid Electrolysis / Waxing / Depilatory Creams (of treatment areas) for 2 weeks prior.
4. If you have been on Accutane in the last 2 months you cannot do the treatment.
5. Gunn Dermatology may prescribe a 4% Hydroquinone Cream or skin brightening cream for use 4-8 weeks prior to treatment to reduce the risk of Hyperpigmentation (PIH). Stop this medication three days before your treatment.
6. If you have a history of cold sores you will be prescribed an antiviral medication that you will take as instructed. It is important to take this.
7. Make sure you have a post laser balm on hand to apply post-treatment for the first few days as instructed. We will make suggestions in the clinic.
8. Stop using Retin-A, Hydroquinone, Retinols, Renova, Differin, for three at least days prior to treatment. Stop Alpha- hydroxy acids (glycolic acid), beta-hydroxy acids (salicylic acid) & Benzoyl Peroxide topicals and any other similar or exfoliating products that may be drying and/or irritating 2 weeks prior to your procedure. You may usually begin re-using your regular skincare products approximately 1-2 weeks after the procedure and when all peeling has stopped.
9. Please do not wear make-up and/or jewelry on the day of your procedure. Please be prepared to remove your contact lenses before treatment or wear glasses preferentially. Wear comfortable clothing that buttons down in front (no pullovers). Wear layers in case you are cold or warm.
10. You must notify us of any piercings, permanent makeup, tattoos, or suspicious skin moles in the area of treatment.
11. Check List of products to have on hand before appointment
  1. Pre treatment prescriptions picked up: typically Percocet and Ativan
  2. Post treatment oral medications picked up: typically Valrex and Keflex

3. Purchase your post treatment emollients like Neocutis Biocream, Avene Cicalfate, new and clean Vasoline or Neocutis Aftercare, White distilled vinegar, clean water from a bottle. You will need a good sunscreen to use post peeling like Neocutis MicroDay or Alastin Hydratint. Sarna sensitive lotion for itching/burning.
4. Have a sun hat and button down shirt for the day of treatment.

### **Post-Treatment Instructions**

1. **Immediately after the treatment** your skin will be clean with a fresh emollient applied by the staff. It will likely be a combination of Neocutis Biocream and Avene Cicalfate, but this may vary depending on your specific needs. You can continue to add your recommended emollients that day if you feel dry. Clean ice packs can also be used to reduce swelling and tenderness. Start taking your oral antibiotics and antivirals.

2. The morning after your treatment, start cleansing the skin with Vinegar Water soaks. **This is 1/3 part white distilled vinegar and 2/3 clean water.** Skin should be soaked 2-4 times a day with only vinegar water soaks and a clean cloth. **DO NOT USE ANY CLEANSERS, SOAPS OR TONERS. DO NOT** scrub the skin. After you have cleansed the skin with vinegar apply a thick layer of a post laser balm. You may begin using gentle non-acidic cleanser when the skin has stopped peeling and healed. This will vary depending on depth of treatments and how each individual heals. If you are uncertain if it is safe to start using cleansers take a few selfies and text us at 205-736-2864.

3. **Moisturize** after cleansing the skin with vinegar soaks with your post laser balm liberally to treated areas until healed. Do not allow the skin to dry out. Adequate cleansing and liberal moisture will minimize skin flakiness, tenderness, and speed the peeling process.

4. **Strictly avoid the sun** for the first eight weeks after treatment. **YOU WILL BURN AND HAVE HYPERPIGMENTATION IF YOU HAVE DIRECT SUN EXPOSURE.** While the skin is healing and you are using a post laser balm do not use any other skincare products. If you must go outside wear a wide brim hat and stay in the shade. Aerobic exercise, saunas, hot showers and hot tubs should be avoided while healing. Gentle exercise is encouraged and helps healing and decrease swelling faster.

5. **Treat Pain and Discomfort with Cool** compresses or ice packs with a damp soft cloth for 10-20 minutes at a time may relieve temporary discomfort. Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, Motrin, or Tylenol can be taken as directed for pain. Post laser balm should be applied 3-6 times daily until skin has healed over. Sarna Sensitive lotion can help with itching as you peel and is found at most pharmacies.

6. **Return to Regular Skincare Regimen / Make-up Use** once the skin has healed. You may start to wear water based Make-up once the skin has completed peeled and healed. Speak with our skincare specialists about what skin care products to restart after your skin has healed. Usually this is 1-2 weeks. Do not start any skincare products without consulting our staff.

Without a good skincare regimen for further improvement and maintenance your results will not last. You should also be using a physical sunblock while healing and a sunscreen with a minimum of SPF30 afterwards.

7. **Causes for Concern** and when to notify our office: If you experience worsening of pain, excessive swelling, worsening of redness, bleeding that is not pinpoint, vesicles, blisters, drainage (pus), increased warmth at or around treated area or fever of 101.5 or greater please notify our office immediately **Call 205-415-7536**. If we do not answer, Dr. Gunn's cell phone is 251-401-9076. Do not hesitate to call if you are concerned. Please always take pictures that you can email or text us at [staff@gunnderamtology.com](mailto:staff@gunnderamtology.com). Pictures are also good to have for day to day healing comparison.

In case of any emergency dial 911 or go to the nearest ER.