

Chemical Peeling

Chemical peeling is used to improve the skin's appearance by applying a chemical solution to the skin, causing the top layers of skin to separate and peel off. The new skin is smoother, less wrinkled, and may be more even in color.

Dermatologists may enhance the results of a chemical peel with laser/light-based rejuvenation techniques, or combine with another procedure, such as dermal fillers or botulinum rejuvenation. A thorough evaluation by your dermatologist will help determine what best meets your needs.



Sun damage of the neck



Six months after superficial chemical peel

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WHAT CAN A CHEMICAL PEEL DO?

- Reduce fine lines, especially under the eyes and around the mouth.
- Treat mild scarring and certain types of acne.
- Diminish skin discoloration, such as sun spots, age spots, liver spots, freckles, or blotchiness.
- Refresh skin texture and color.

HOW ARE CHEMICAL PEELS PERFORMED?

Prior to treatment, you may be instructed to stop certain medications and prepare the skin with pre-conditioning creams, which you would apply at home for a period of time. A chemical peel is usually performed in a dermatologist's office, involving the following:

- Cleansing the skin with an agent that removes excess oils; eyes and hair are protected.
- Applying the peel to the designated location (face, neck, chest, hands, arms, or legs), using one or more chemical solutions, such as glycolic acid, trichloroacetic acid, salicylic acid, lactic acid, or carboic acid (phenol).
- Using the proper peeling agent (superficial, medium or deep) based upon the type of skin damage present and your desired results.

During a chemical peel, most patients experience a warm to hot sensation that may last about 5 to 10 minutes and may be followed by some stinging. A deeper peel can be more painful and require medication during or after the procedure, and require a longer recovery time.

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Mild acne scarring on a 32-year-old female



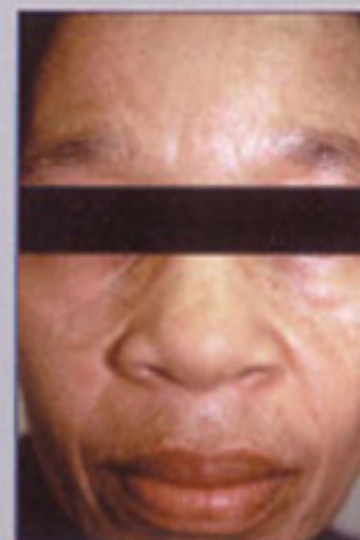
Two months after chemical peel

WHAT SHOULD BE EXPECTED AFTER TREATMENT?

To minimize the reappearance of lesions and lines, dermatologists recommend daily use of a broad-spectrum (blocks ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B rays) sunscreen.



53-year-old with melasma



After two treatments one month apart

Depending upon the type of peel applied, there may be a mild to severe sunburn-like sensation. The gentlest type of peel, a superficial peel,

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usually produces redness, which is followed by scaling that lasts three to five days.

Medium-depth and deep peels can result in swelling and blisters that may break, crust, turn brown, and peel off over a period of seven to 14 days or longer. Some peels may require surgical tape to be placed on part or all of the treated skin.



42-year-old female with skin type II



Nine months after chemical peel

ARE THERE COMPLICATIONS?

People with certain skin types have a risk of developing a temporary or permanent skin color change. This risk may increase if you take birth control pills, have been pregnant, or have a family history of brownish discoloration on the face. Persistent redness also may occur after a chemical peel and can last for months.

Although very low, there is a risk of scarring after a chemical peel. If scarring does occur, it can usually be treated with good results. Proper precautions should be taken for patients with a history of fever blisters, cold sores or keloids.

WHAT ARE THE LIMITATIONS OF CHEMICAL PEELS?

- Cannot tighten loose or sagging skin.
- Does not remove deep scars.
- Cannot change pore size or remove broken blood vessels on the face; however, the procedure may improve the appearance of these conditions.

Dermatologists can perform other procedures to address these conditions.

A dermatologist is a physician who specializes in treating the medical, surgical and cosmetic conditions of the skin, hair and nails. To learn more about chemical peeling, log onto www.aad.org, or call toll free (888) 462-DERM (3376) to find a dermatologist in your area.



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