CO_2 laser *pre-care*

HOW YOU ARRIVE DECIDES HOW YOU HEAL

CO_2 works by creating controlled microscopic injuries that your skin repairs stronger than it was. How well that repair goes depends on the state your skin is in when you walk in — above all, how much sun it has seen and how hydrated it is. This is a treatment you prepare for over weeks, not days, and it comes with real downtime. Plan for both.

TWO TO FOUR WEEKS BEFORE Sun Matters Most

- **No sun, no tanning beds, no self-tanner.** Do not arrive with a fresh tan or a sunburn — we will reschedule you. Recently tanned skin carries a much higher risk of pigment problems afterward.
- Wear **SPF 50+** every day between now and your appointment.
- We may start you on skincare prep — a retinoid or a pigment inhibitor — and we will tell you exactly when to stop it.

TELL US BEFORE WE TREAT

- A history of cold sores or fever blisters, anywhere on the face.
- A tendency to keloid, scar badly, or recent isotretinoin (Accutane) use.
- Any autoimmune condition, or anything that slows your healing.
- A recent tan or sun exposure, even if it has faded, or if you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

THE WEEK BEFORE

- Stop retinoids, retinol and harsh exfoliants — unless we tell you otherwise.
- No waxing, electrolysis, or hair removal in the treatment area.
- **If you are prone to cold sores, start the antiviral prescribe exactly as directed,** usually the day before or day of, even with no sore present.
- 2-3 days leading up to your visit, if it is safe for you, **avoid aspirin, NSAIDs, fish oil, vitamin E, and alcohol.** Never stop a prescribed blood thinner without reviewing it with your prescribing provider.

HYDRATE THE SKIN ITSELF Water Is the Target

- **Water is what the laser actually aims at.** The CO2 wavelength is absorbed by water — its chromophore. Well-hydrated skin takes the energy more evenly and recovers better, so hydrating beforehand is part of the treatment.
- Drink water consistently the week before, and keep your barrier well moisturized.
- **Our favorite at Aster is the CO2LIFT Carboxy Gel Mask.** In published clinical work it improved skin hydration **by 117% after a single application** and raised microcirculation by 28%. Pick one up from us ahead of your appointment and use it at home a few hours before you come in.

ASK ABOUT PDGF In Office Add-On

- **PDGF is a topical growth factor we apply immediately after your laser,** while the channels are still open and the skin can take it up. It carries **up to 300,000x the growth factor concentration of PRP or PF** — the platelet treatments made from your own blood — and does more than space healing: it multiplies fibroblasts and slows collagen breakdown, so it keeps building your result after you heal.

PLAN THE DAY — AND THE WEEK AFTER

- **Clear your calendar honestly:** 3-7 days for CoolPeel, 10-14 for deeper. Never near an event.
- **Have your aftercare at home first:** Hyacyn Active, Vaseline, cleanser, mineral SPF 50+.
- Arrive with clean skin — no makeup, lotion, sunscreen, or perfume on the area.
- Eat a light meal beforehand, and arrange a ride if you are given numbing or sedating medication.