**Post laser remodeling of scar tissue**

Lasers work on different targets in the tissue, so you may see different responses based on what laser was used. By and large we use three different laser types for treating scar tissue:

* **PDL** – pulse dye laser – this laser’s wavelength treats vascular components of the scar tissue. After treatment you will notice bruising that will begin to fade by 7 to 10 days. The laser is delivered through a round distance gauge so bruises will appear in circular patterns. Some of the bruising may be quite dark, bluish to dark purple. This will fade in time. You may develop some small areas of blistering. This would be similar to a simple blister you may see on the back of your heel from breaking in new shoes. Let us know if you see anything more pronounced in appearance. Normally you may have a small amount of puffiness in the area treated. Discomfort in the area should resolve over 2 to 3 days.
* **fCO2** – fractionated carbon dioxide laser – this laser acts on the water in your tissue making microscopic channels in your skin using a grid type pattern. Even though you cannot really see the openings in your skin they are present. So anticipate a small amount of drainage, usually clear with maybe a very small amount of blood. This is normal. Your treated tissue will tighten and appear pink or somewhat reddened with mild swelling. Please call us should you have any drainage that is foul smelling, yellow to greenish in color or lasts beyond day 3 post treatments. Additionally, let us know should the area beyond that treated becomes swollen and red or if you notice the treated area becoming warm or hot to the touch. Your discomfort post procedure should resolve in 3 to 5 days and the microscopic channels should be completely closed by 10 days. The tightening effect can last for some time as the tissue remodels. Swelling should begin to decrease by day 2 and be gone by day 4.
* **ILD** – injected light diode – this laser targets hair follicles. The base of the hair shaft or bulb, heats up and is destroyed by the laser energy. Your body will absorb the debris created from this process over the period of 7 to 10 days. Initially you may notice some mild redness and a little puffiness in the areas treated. You may appreciate small lumps or nodules under the skin that itch. These are areas of destroyed hair follicles under the skin. This will resolve as the debris is broken down and removed by your body. Let us know if the redness does not fade within 24 hours or if you develop any drainage in these areas. The itching generally resolves by day 5.

**Wound care -**

* Shower the morning after your procedure and daily there afterwards. Use mild soap and pat the area dry, do not rub your skin. No tub baths/pools or getting into bodies of water for 14 days after your fCO2 treatment or if you develop blisters from the PDL. Immersing open wounds in water will increase your risk of infection.
* If treated with the fCO2 you may have a clear covering with or without a gauze wrap over the area treated. This is simply to help the medication we applied absorb into your skin. We ask that you leave the covering in place overnight, removing it in the morning when you shower. If it becomes uncomfortable it can be removed the evening of your procedure.
* You will be discharged with a tube of bacitracin ointment. Apply this to the treated areas per your discharge instructions.

**Pain –** it is normal to experience some degree of discomfort after your laser procedure. A good portion of this is related to inflammation in the tissue as a component of remodeling. We will review this with you prior to your discharge. In certain cases we may prescribe specific medication, but it is anticipated that this would only be needed for 2 to 3 days.

**In summary –**

1. Refer to your discharge instructions. We anticipate that you will have questions after your procedure and provide these instructions to serve as a resource.
2. Call us should any of the following occur;
	1. Fever > 101 degrees
	2. Abnormal drainage (bad smell, green or yellow color)
	3. Redness that moves outside of the area treated
	4. Blistering beyond what could be seen on your heel when breaking in a new pair of shoes
	5. Nausea, vomiting or chills
	6. Pronounced rash beyond the area treated, may be associated with intense itching.
	7. Swelling or significant redness in the treated area that has not resolved by day 3