

Frequently Asked Questions

Laser Resurfacing FAQs

Q: What is laser resurfacing?

A: Laser resurfacing is a cosmetic procedure able to treat damaged skin with the use of a laser device. The procedure can treat sun-damaged skin, fine lines, facial scars, uneven pigmentation, and acne scars.

Q: Who is a good candidate for laser resurfacing?

A: The best candidate for laser resurfacing is a physically healthy man or woman who is realistic in their expectations and looking to improve the skin's appearance. The procedure may not be appropriate for those with olive, brown or black skin as pigmentation changes can occur.

Q: Where can laser resurfacing be performed?

A: The laser resurfacing procedure may take place in a surgeon's office-based facility, an outpatient surgical center, or a hospital.

Q: Is anesthesia used during the laser resurfacing procedure?

A: Local anesthesia and sedation are commonly used for the procedure, though general anesthesia may be used for more extensive resurfacing.

Q: How long does laser resurfacing take?

A: For the treatment of smaller areas, laser resurfacing can take as little as a few minutes to complete while larger areas can take over an hour. In addition, multiple sessions may be required for some patients.

Q: Is there much pain with laser resurfacing?

A: Laser resurfacing is not a painful procedure though some patients may experience some amount of discomfort afterward.

Q: Will I need to have someone drive me home after the laser resurfacing procedure?

A: When sedation is used for laser resurfacing, patients will not be able to drive themselves home.

Q: What is the recovery like after a laser resurfacing procedure?

A: Mild swelling and discomfort can occur. The skin will be thin and pink immediately after the procedure. Over the next three months, it will thicken, the pinkness will fade, and the wrinkles will continue diminish. A recovery period of ten to fourteen days can generally be expected. Sunscreen must be worn during this time and should be continued for six to twelve months.

Q: When can I return to work after my laser resurfacing procedure?

A: Most patients find that they can return to work within about two weeks. Hypoallergenic makeup can be worn at this time to help conceal any redness or swelling.

Q: Are there any risks or complications with laser resurfacing?

A: Abnormal color changes, burns or injuries from the laser heat, cold sores, infection, and scarring are some of the complications that can occur with laser resurfacing.

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Q: Is laser resurfacing ever covered by insurance?

A: Insurance coverage is usually not available for laser resurfacing procedures performed solely for cosmetic purposes. However, some degree of coverage may be available for procedures used to treat pre-cancerous skin growths or scars. Patients should check with their own insurance carrier regarding the degree and/or availability of coverage.

Q: Is it possible to get financing for laser resurfacing?

A: Financing is available for many plastic surgery procedures and your surgeon should be able to provide you with additional information.

Q: Are the results of laser resurfacing permanent?

A: The results of laser resurfacing are typically long lasting. However, laser resurfacing cannot stop the aging process and new wrinkles and lines may form as the skin continues to age.