

Chemical Peels

What are chemical peels?

Chemical peels, also known as chemical resurfacing, are chemical treatments to produce an improved appearance of the face. Chemical peels are used for the treatment of photoaging (from sun damage), wrinkles, scarring, acne, precancerous lesions, and discoloration (or dyschromia). Chemical peels produce controlled injury to the skin that promotes the growth of new skin with an improved appearance.

What are chemical peels used for?

- Repair skin damage from years of sun exposure
- Repair and remove fine facial lines anywhere on your face
- Removal or decrease of lip creases, crow's feet and deep forehead lines
- Completely peels & removes dry flaky skin
- Minimize appearance of pores
- Improve skin tone and texture
- Remove lesions and improves scarring
- Improve acne, pimples, black heads, and clogged pores by killing the bacteria
- Lessen freckles and age spots on the face or body
- Remove or lightens liver and sun spots
- Lighten skin and dark spots

What are the different types of peels?

There are many different kinds of peels and each one is performed differently. In general, chemical peels usually begin with vigorous cleansing of the skin. Very light peels (e.g. low potency glycolic acid, 10-20% TCA) only penetrate the dead skin cells that sit atop the epidermis and produce almost no injury. Sometimes, this level of peel is called "exfoliation." Light peels (70% glycolic acid, 25-35% TCA) injure the entire epidermis and stimulate the regeneration of a new epidermis. This level of chemical peel may produce a burning sensation during the procedure. Medium depth peels involve injury to the upper level of the dermis.

Injury to the dermis stimulates the formation of collagen and "plumps" up the skin. 35% TCA, in combination with another chemical such as glycolic acid, is used safely with minimal discomfort. Burning is the most common complaint during the procedure and this is usually well controlled with cool compresses, and sometimes topical anesthetic. Deep peels involve injury to the mid dermis and are usually performed using a phenol solution and anesthesia.

TCA Chemical Peels

- Medium Depth
- Removal of Mild to Moderate surface wrinkles and pigmentation problems
- Light to Medium Removal of sun damage and hyperpigmentation.

The advantage of trichloroacetic (TCA) acid peels is that the degree and depth of penetration within the skin can be controlled. The concentration of TCA in the chemical peel is an important factor that alters the depth of the peel. Concentration can vary from 15 to 35%, with the higher concentrations leading to a deeper peel.

TCA chemical peels provide an intermediate level of improvement at an intermediate cost and recovery period. May require pre-treatment with Retin-A or AHA cream. Treatment only takes 15 minutes. Peel depth can be adjusted, preferred for dark-skinned patients, and can be used on the neck and body. Peeling and flaking is usually completed in four to seven days.

B-Lift Beta Lift Peel / Glycolic Acid Peel

- Light Peel ideal for oily or acne-prone skin
- Light Peel Skin freshening, for the reduction of mild wrinkling and sun damage

Salicylic acid, a common beta hydroxy acid (BHA), has been used for treating acne for decades. In fact, acne treatment remains the primary use for beta hydroxy acids. Its effect on the epidermis and upper dermis are similar to those of Retin-A, but with less irritation. It is soluble in oil and can exfoliate oily skin areas, even within oil-rich pores. Therefore, it has a beneficial effect on acne, pigmentation and sun-damaged skin. BHAs are effective in reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, and improving overall skin texture, without the occasional irritation associated with the use of Alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs). BHA is believed to penetrate the skin more deeply than AHA, and is gentler.

Alpha hydroxy acids work mainly as an exfoliant. They cause the surface cells of the skin (epidermis) to become “unglued.” This allows skin cells to slough off, making room for re-growth of younger-looking, new skin. In addition, AHAs stimulate the production of collagen and elastin. The result is skin that is smooth in appearance and texture.

Alpha hydroxy acids are the mildest of the chemical peel formulas and produce light skin peels. These peels include the 20-40% peels often referred to as the “lunchtime peels.” These types of peels can provide smoother, brighter-looking skin for people who can’t spare the time to recover from the more intense chemical peels. It improves the texture of sun-damaged skin, can be mixed with a bleaching agent to correct pigment problems, can be used as a TCA pre-treatment, and aids in the control of acne.

A series of peels may be needed.

Jessner Peel

- Medium Depth peel

Jessner’s Peel is a superior treatment designed to remove superficial layers of skin. It’s one of the most effective light cosmetic peels available. A Jessner peel consists of a mild peeling agent that can be used to lighten areas of hyperpigmentation and to treat aged sun-damaged skin.

The Jessner’s peel is excellent for all skin types. It smoothes and rejuvenates skin, producing beautiful results in treating mild to severe acne, discoloration, moderate wrinkling, and sun damage. Peeling the face, neck, hands, and upper chest is also quite effective.

The Jessner’s peel is very beneficial for patients with acne, oily, or thicker skin, because it tends to decrease oil production and open clogged sebaceous follicles. It also contributes to the healing process of acne.

The Jessner's peel combines resorcinol, lactic acid, and salicylic acid to result in deeper penetration and greater exfoliation of the outer layers of skin cells. This deeper exfoliation produces noticeable flaking and exfoliation in the following three to four days after the peel, and within a week a smoother, healthier layer of skin will be revealed.

About the Jessner's Peel

A Jessner's Peel is a medium depth peel performed by a dermatologist and is designed for more extensive damage than AHA's can improve. It is made from salicylic acid (a beta hydroxy acid), lactic acid (an alpha hydroxy acid) and resorcinol. Your doctor will apply a glycolic cleanser over your face to fully remove the oils and horny layer so that your Jessner's solution will penetrate properly. Then he will apply the Jessner's solution to your face, it will then burn slightly (although this uncomfortable sensation can be relieved by a fan blowing cool air on your treatment area). You will peel and flake for about 7 days and turn pink or brown afterwards. After you heal nice, smooth skin will be revealed.

Phenol Peel

- Deep Chemical Peel

Used to treat patients with course facial wrinkles. Corrects blotches caused by sun exposure, birth control pills and aging. Smooths out course wrinkles and removes precancerous growth. Used on the face only and not recommended for dark-skinned individuals. Procedure may pose risks for patients with heart problems. Full face treatment may take one hour or more and recovery may be slow with months of healing. It may remove freckles permanently and permanent skin lightening and lines of demarcation may occur. Results are dramatic and long lasting.

How long do chemical peels take?

Most peels are performed in less than one hour, depending on size of the area being treated.

How are chemical peels performed?

We will first clean your skin of any oils. The chemical solution is either brushed on or applied with a pad. You may feel a slight stinging as the peel solution penetrates your skin. Once removed, your skin will be moisturized and you will be advised to wear a sunscreen. Your skin will feel tight and will look rosy for a few hours to several days. Your chemical peel will cause some flaking and peeling. Chemical peels may be augmented with Vbeam laser for resolving broken blood vessels and IPL Fotofacial for removing encapsulated or resistant pigmentation.

What will my skin feel like after a chemical peel?

The state of your skin after a peel depends on what kind of peel you had. The superficial peels have limited effects, the medium peels may cause some redness and the deeper peels may require weeks to recover.

How many peels will I need?

The superficial peels are usually done several times over the course of several months. The deeper peels usually only need to be performed once to achieve the desired effect. Regardless of the technique, you will likely need repeat treatments in the future. You and your physician will decide what is best for you.

How long do the results last?

With good sun protection, results can last months to years, depending on the depth of the peel. Generally, the deeper peels have a more long lasting effect.

What are the risks of chemical peels?

Superficial peels are quite safe although rarely minor irritation of the skin can occur. The risks of deeper peels include infection, scarring, redness, and discoloration. Furthermore, during a deep peel, anesthesia must be used and vital signs must be monitored throughout the procedure. Check with your doctor if a chemical peel is appropriate for you.

How long after a chemical peel before I can return to normal activities?

Superficial peels require no recovery time (hence the name “lunchtime peel”). Recovery from a deep peel requires occlusive bandages and can take weeks to months under normal circumstances.