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THE PRIVATE SKIN LASER CLINIC
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ACNE SCARRING

LASER TREATMENT OF ACNE SCARS

The fractional CO2 laser makes a powerful beam of light that removes part of the skin. Each shot with the laser covers about a square centimetre and is split up into grid of several hundred tiny beams. We call this type of laser a fractionated ablative photo rejuvenation laser. It can help the appearance of acne scarring, sun damaged skin, fine wrinkles and mottled pigment. It is not as aggressive as a peel or full laser resurfacing, it is safer but the results are more modest.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Each tiny laser beam penetrates into the collagen layer of the skin and removes a tiny core of skin the size of a hair. Hundreds of these tiny wounds are made every square centimetre. Removing part of the scar in this way decreases its size and also the injury stimulates new collagen to form.

WHAT PREPARATION IS REQUIRED?

You should avoid all sun exposure for a month before treatment and throughout your treatment. You should not have treatment if you have a skin infection or a cold sore. If you are prone to cold sores preventative medicine will be required. Your face must be cleaned of all make up and there must be no artificial tan. Any medication you take will be checked. In particular if you take, anticoagulants, Roaccuttane, gold injections, or immuno-suppressants. You have to wait a year after stopping Roaccuttane before laser resurfacing. You should not have laser

treatment if you are epileptic, pregnant, have had skin cancer, have a darker skin type, are tanned, are prone to keloid scars, or have had other facial procedures in the past year. Men should have a close shave on the day of treatment.

WHAT IS IT LIKE?

The procedure will take about half an hour. Topical anaesthetic will be applied an hour before under a cling film wrap. You will wear blindfold goggles during the treatment. The laser blows cold air on your face and each zap feels hot and sharp for a second. The heat builds up during the treatment and for an hour after wards it will feel quite hot. The treated area will look red for a week, longer if you have had an intensive treatment. An anti inflammatory steroid cream will be applied to your face before you leave.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

The laser light can damage your eyes and you must wear safety goggles to protect your sight. Side effects are rare but include unwanted pigment changes, either pale marks, or dark marks. These usually gradually improve. Blistering can occur if the treated area gets too hot. If the blisters or scabs are picked or scratched then scarring may result. Skin infections are possible through the small wounds, these increase the risk of scarring. The laser is not thought to be cancer forming.

WHAT RESULTS CAN I EXPECT?

There maybe an immediate temporary improvement due to some mild swelling, this may persist in a subtle way for several weeks. New collagen takes a few months to show. The benefit is slow. About a third of patients have a noticeable improvement by 6 months, another third a mild improvement and another third not much improvement.

WHAT AFTERCARE IS REQUIRED?

We will apply a steroid cream to your face before leaving the clinic to reduce the inflammation. Your face will be puffy for a couple of days. Ice packs and paracetamol will make you feel more comfortable. It is important not to rub pick or scratch even if it is itchy. You should apply Vaseline from a new clean pot twice a day and keep out of the sun. Redness will persist for many days and can be disguised with makeup. No alcohol aspirin or anti-inflammatory drugs like Ibuprofen for one week. If leaving the house wear factor 50 SPF sunblock with 4 or 5 star UV protection. **Use a new clean tube.** Suitable products include Boots Soltan range, Anthelios XL by La Roche Posay, and Sensense Ultra. You must not try to tan your face for six months. If any symptoms worsen, particularly if it is getting more painful instead of less, then contact the clinic on 020 7435 7521.

COSTS

Dr Griffiths' private appointments are on Mondays. At your initial consultation the various treatments options will be discussed. If more than one procedure is planned they are usually performed several months apart. Procedures are charged in advance, at the time of confirming your appointment. Some insurance companies may classify these procedures as cosmetic. We will therefore charge you directly and will not charge insurance companies on your behalf.

First consultation	£200
Clinical Photographs	£100
Follow up appointments	£100
Microdermabrasion session	£120
Subcision & Excision session	£240 - £480
Fractionated CO ₂ laser treatment	£600-£1200