

Skin Peeling Guide

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Abstract

Everything You Should Know About Skin Peeling

In nowadays society, first impression always matters. This is why a healthy, good looking skin is what most people long for. Yet, not all of those who wish to have a smooth, flawless skin can see their dream come true by natural means. This is where skin peeling comes in action. Multiple types of treatments are available for those who want to have a clean and smooth face.

This guide will be updated through the year so be sure to come frequently to our website and download the latest version. For now we have 13 chapters that are being completed everymonth until we have the ultimate online peeling guide.

Our guide is divided in 13 chapters:

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Chapter 2 - Where can you do chemical peeling?

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Chapter 1

How can chemical peel be useful?

There are multiple skin problems which can be treated by using chemical peeling. One of the most encountered issues for which people turn to this kind of treatment are the uneven pigmentation or light discoloration of skin. These types of problems can be a result of excessive exposure to sun, of the intake of strong drugs, which have affected the skin, can be an effect of acne or can be caused by a genetic factor. In each of these cases, the skin has an uneven color and its aspect is very dull.

Another issue which can be successfully treated by chemical peeling is the acne scars and dark spots left by this terrible skin condition. After the condition was successfully dealt with, the affected skin will look discolored and will be scarred. Chemical peel leaves the skin looking great and you will no longer be ashamed to walk out of the house because of the way your skin looks like.

In addition to this, the blackheads are completely eliminated and the enlarged pores are reduced, thus making the skin look better. Also, the chances of the acne coming back are significantly reduced after a chemical peel.

Last, but not least, chemical peeling is very useful when it comes to reducing and even eliminating wrinkles and fine lines which have invaded your face. This type of skin treatment can make you forget about the laughter lines, the nasty crow's feet or the brow lines which mark every year which passes.

Chapter 2

Where can you do chemical peeling?

If you have one of those skin problems you can turn to chemical peeling for help. What you should know is that there are several places where you can undergo this procedure. Because it is a treatment which affects the upper and sometimes the medium layers of skin, it is recommended that chemical peeling should be done in medical offices. Not only that you will be more carefully treated, but you will also benefit from specialized consulting before peeling before undergoing chemical peeling and you will be monitored after the treatment. In addition to this, your doctor will be able to recommend you the type of chemical peel suitable for your problem and type of skin. Also, he will prescribe you the post-procedure treatment, if necessary.

If you are not keen in going to a medical center for this type of treatment, there are spas which offer it too. Here, you will also find specialized staff which will take care of you. However, you may not benefit from a complete set of tests and/or post-therapeutic assistance, like in the medical office.

There are also chemical peels which can be done at home. The advantage of these home treatments is the fact that they can be done at any hour in the day, even in your lunch break, without needing any appointment. However, before choosing such a treatment, you should go see a doctor and ask him to recommend you the product or type of products which are better for your problem and your skin type. Otherwise, you risk making your skin look worse than originally and you can even put you health in danger.

Chapter 3

When chemical peel is not recommended?

Chemical peeling is not suitable for anyone. For example, if you suffer from a heart disease or any of your parents have had such a disease, it is not recommended that you undergo such a procedure. Also, if you do not cope with anesthesia or have had previous allergic reactions to anesthetics you should avoid strong chemical peeling treatments which involve total or partial anesthesia.

Before undergoing this procedure it is recommended to make a medical test in order to detect any disease which may affect in any way the peel's result, you have to make sure that you do not have any allergies to one or more of the substances which are going to be used during the treatment. If you have one of the following skin conditions: dermatitis, inflammatory rosacea, wounds, burned skin or cold sores you should wait until they are completely healed and only afterwards go for a chemical peel.

Women who are pregnant or who are breastfeed their children are not allowed to undergo chemical peeling.

Chapter 4

Types of chemical peeling

As you probably know there are several types of chemical peeling. They vary mainly according to the substance used in the treatment and according to its strength.

Based on these criteria, we can have light peel, which does not affect the inner layers of the skin, peels off only the dead skin; medium peel, which is stronger than the light peel; strong peel, which is mainly performed under anesthesia and which it affects the inner layers of the skin.

Depending on the substances employed and their concentrations, there are chemical peels which can be done at home, without medical surveillance, such as those which use alpha hydroxyl acids, also known as AHA (glycolic acid, citric acid, lactic acid, Malic acid, tartaric acid) and peels which must be done only in medical offices (Retinoic Acid Peel, Obagi Blue Peel, Phenol Peel).

If you decide to go for a chemical peel, you have to start with the milder ones. If the effects do not satisfy you, you can gradually increase the percentage of pure substance used for the treatment. If after increasing the concentration, the chemical peel still does not fulfill your wishes, then it is time you changed the substance and (probably) choose a stronger one. Below you will find some of the chemical peel substances and some details about each of them.

Chapter 5

Glycolic Acid Peel

Glycolic acid is an alpha hydroxy acid (also known as AHA) and it is made of natural fruit acids, usually from sugar cane. This substance is used for mild peels, as it gently removes the dead cells, leaving the skin shiny, healthy and good looking.

This treatment is mainly used for mild skin discoloration due to age or sunlight, fine lines, age spots or sun burns.

Treatments with glycolic acid are mainly performed in spa centers. Here, the skin is cleaned carefully and it is prepared for the treatment. Afterwards, the glycolic acid is applied and left on the face for about half an hour.

Because it is so gentle, a lot of home peel products containing glycolic acid have been developed lately. These home treatments are usually considered “lunchtime” treatments, because they should be taken on the skin between 15 and 30 minutes. And because their side effects are rather rare and invisible to the other’s eyes (sometimes the treated area may turn reddish), you can go back to work, without someone even suspecting that you have had a chemical peel.

If you are doing this for the first time, you should use small concentrations of glycolic acid. Some doctors recommend a 10% concentration, while others say that you can use a peel solution with as much as 20 – 30% concentration for your first chemical peel.

After having undergone the treatment the skin may turn reddish and become more sensitive. Also an itchy sensation may appear. If you experience one or all these sensations you do not have to panic, they happen to most of those who have a chemical peeling and will pass in one or two days.

Chapter 6

Lactic Acid Peel

Just like glycolic acid, lactic acid is an AHA, but made out of sour milk. Considered to be less invasive than the glycolic acid because it is already contained in our body, the lactic acid can be used by people who have very sensitive skin or who have darker skin and fear that a glycolic acid may cause them skin discoloration.

It is used for discoloration problems, hyperpigmentation, age spots, brown spots, fine lines and wrinkles and mild acne scars. Because it is an AHA, it removes the dead skin by loosening the glue like substance which binds the cells together.

Lactic acid works only on the outer layer of skin, thus preventing any damage of the medium and inner layers and minimizing the risks of side effects. However, even though it does not affect in any way the medium layer of skin, it does contribute to the collagen growth and stimulates the elastic fibers, thus making your skin look younger and feel softer.

There are two options to undergo this treatment. The first one is to make an appointment at the nearest spa and let your face be cleaned and peeled off by specialized personal or try to do everything all by yourself, case in which you have to ask for a doctor's or for the pharmacist's advice. If you go for this second option, make sure that the products you use do not exceed 30% concentration of lactic acid, at least not for the first time. Leave 50% products to specialists and go for milder products, which have fewer risks.

Chapter 7

Salicylic Acid Peel

Salicylic acid is viewed by most persons as a more convenient alternative to glycolic and lactic acids. Not only because it has better results, but also because it is less harmful to your skin, leaving less reddish spots and itchy sensation.

Salicylic acid is a beta hydroxy acid or BHA and it is made from sweet bark and willow bark trees. Even though it is also used for treating minor discoloration, fine lines and wrinkles and sun damage, the major use of salicylic acid peel is that of treating acne.

Just like the other two acids mentioned above, salicylic acid treatment can be done at home or it can be undergone in a specialized clinic or spa center. It is up to you to choose the solution which fits your skin, your program and your pocket.

There are some restrictions for using this type of chemical peel. Those who suffer from blood vessel diseases, diabetes mellitus or skin infections should not undergo salicylic acid peel under no circumstances. Also, those who have taken Accutane are strongly cautioned not to undergo this type of peel. Another category of people who should stay away from salicylic acid peel is the pregnant women. Some dermatologists claim that it is risky for people with dark skin to undergo a salicylic peel, as their skin may get discolored from it.

Even though the salicylic acid is milder than the previously mentioned types of acids, after the salicylic peel your skin may look red and shiny. This reaction is quite normal and it will pass in a day or two, so you should not be worried too much about it.

Chapter 8

Trichloroacetic Acid Peel

Trichloroacetic Acid or TCA is a medium strong peel substance. This substance it is used for the same skin conditions as the gentle chemical peels mentioned above. Yet, because it penetrates deeper in the skin, it is more effective and it can also be used for more profound wrinkles and for precancerous lesions.

Even though this procedure is highly effective, it has major drawbacks, too. If you are thinking about getting a TCA peel, you have to be prepared to cope with the side effects like a sun burned skin aspect that will last for about one week and increased skin sensitiveness. Yet, for precancerous lesions, this type of peel is better than liquid nitrogen treatment or other similar alternatives.

Because of these strong side effects and because of the long recovery period (about a week), trichloroacetic acid peel is usually undergone once in a year and it is preferably to be done under medical surveillance. Yet, if you still want to do this peel at home (which is not advisable) you should ask your doctor if you can undergo such a treatment or not. After a thorough examination, your doctor will tell you if this type of peel is good for you or not.

There are certain groups of people who are not allowed to undergo trichloroacetic acid peel. In group are included people who have taken Accutane in the last 6 months, pregnant women or women who breastfeed their babies, people who have had radiation treatment recently, those who are allergic to sun or have a bad reaction to peels, those who had cold sores or have serious sun burns on the area which has to be peeled.

Chapter 9

Jessner Peel

Jessner Peel is another type of medium peel. It is a mixture of substances meant to address deeper damages caused by sun, age, acne or certain diseases. Jessner Peel is made of salicylic acid (BHA), lactic acid (AHA) and resorcinol.

Because Jessner Peel is a medium strong one, it is recommended to be done only in specialized clinics. You do not want to burn your face or cause more damage to your skin instead of making it look softer and nicer, so the best thing you can do if you have decided to go for a Jessner Peel is to have someone do this treatment for you. This way you will be sure that you will help your skin recover and not make it look worse than it used to. Also, doing this treatment in a clinic means that you will be done medical tests to see whether this peel suits your needs.

It is important to know that when Jessner Peel is applied you may have a burning sensation. This can be easily neutralized with a fan blowing cold air on the area which is treated. Basically this is the time when the substance penetrates the skin layer and starts exfoliating your skin. If your condition is severe, several layers of this substance can be applied for better results.

At the end of the treatment your skin may look whiter and after few days it will peel and become flaky. Just like in the case of other types of peels it is very important not to pick at the skin as it may get scarred or infected.

Chapter 10

Kojic Acid Peel

Kojic acid is an ingredient used in the production of the sake, an alcoholic Japanese beverage. In cosmetics, kojic acid is used for treating skin hyperpigmentation and dark spots because it acts as a melanin inhibitor.

Because of this property, Kojic acid is both used in peels and in cosmetic products such as kojic acid soaps and creams. Yet, this acid is very unstable, especially when is used in cosmetics' production. In contact with air, the kojic acid gets a brownish color and loses partially or totally its curative properties.

In order to make it more effective, kojic acid is mixed in cosmetic products with other types of skin whitening substances or exfoliating agents which can potentate its effectiveness. As an alternative for kojic acid, specialists use kojic dipalmitate. It is thought to be as good as the acid, but is much more stable, which makes more and more people to turn to the dipalmitate instead of using the acid.

After the treatment with kojic acid your skin may be a little reddish and irritated, but this sensation is similar to those you get after any kind of peel and it will pass in a matter of days, so you do not get too worried about these minor inconveniences.

Chapter 11

Pre-peel Advices

Before getting a chemical peel there are some things you have to know about the way you should prepare your skin for such a treatment.

If you are doing this procedure at home, with a home kit you bought from the pharmacy, you have to look carefully on the indications and see whether they have specific directions about what you should do before applying the peel substance on the skin.

If you have the treatment done in a specialized clinic, you will be probably told in advance what you are allowed and what you cannot do before undergoing a chemical peel, taking in consideration the type of peel and the type of your skin and the skin problems which need to be addressed.

In each of the two cases you should refrain from any type of tan (including booth and sunless tan) and sun exposure, you should have not had any chemical peel or microdermabrasion in the last two weeks or undergo any type of laser or light treatment.

In addition to this, a week before the chemical peel you should not color your hair or do any kind of hair treatment, you should not wax or use chemical hair removals; you should not make any type of exfoliation, mask or electrolysis. Also, avoid the intake of or treatments with Vitamin A, because if you do not stop it with at least one week prior the treatment, the effects of the chemical peel will be weaker.

In the day in which you are going to make the treatment you should not use any type of moisturizer or make-up. A pre-peel solution will be enough to prepare your skin for the chemical peel. Men should not shave in the same day with the chemical peel as the skin will be more sensitive and become more prone to irritations. Yet, they are allowed to shave the day before the procedure.

Chapter 12

Chemical Peel – How It's Made

No matter if it is done in a specialized clinic or at home, the chemical peel has the same stages.

First, there is a pre-peel stage in which the skin is cleaned of all the impurities which may affect the way in which the peel substances act. This stage is very important, as if it is not done properly, the effects of the chemical peel may be significantly diminished.

After your skin has been properly clean the peel substance is applied on it. If this is the first time you are doing a chemical peel the concentration used in the process will be smaller, increasing gradually in the next sessions. This is mainly to protect your skin from a too aggressive substance.

The substance is left on your skin for minimum 10 minutes and maximum 35 minutes, depending on the type of skin and the problem which needs to be corrected. If you are doing the peel in a specialized clinic the time will be set and controlled by the doctor, but if you are doing it at home, you will be the one to monitor the elapsed time, so you will have to keep your clock at hand. After this time the solution is taken off from your face, usually with cold water or neutralizing lotion.

Because after such a treatment the skin is usually irritated, it should be treated with moisturizing lotions which will calm the irritation and will take away the discomfort caused by it.

Chapter 13

Post Chemical Peel Effects

After the chemical peel the skin will become irritated and flaky. This is the time when the old, dead skin is removed and the new layer of skin starts to be seen. If the chemical peel was done properly you will see how your skin turns smoother, your wrinkles and the fine lines are barely visible, the spots are removed and your skin has a uniform color.

Yet, you should know that after the chemical peel your skin will be more sensitive, can be irritated and have a reddish color. These side effects are normal and with proper care, they will pass in few days. In this case, proper care means using sunscreen products to protect it from the sun burns, use moisturizing lotions, avoid making exaggerated facial expressions which can tear the skin and cause lesions, avoid sun, do not use any type of products containing glycolic acid, do not exfoliate the skin or pick at it, do not rub or scratch the treated skin.

Also if a herpes appears in the recovery period you should tell your dermatologist about it, as if this problem is not addressed with special care, the herpes may spread all over your face and make your skin look worse than before the peel. Also, if you have any problems with your skin, have any doubts or worries regarding the way in which the skin should look like after the treatment you should contact the dermatologist and ask for further details and even make an appointment for a routine check, if you feel like doing it. This will help you prevent any type of complication which may appear after the chemical peel.

The treatment can be repeated after a period of time. The period depends on the substance it has been used for the peel. For example, in the case of mild substances, such as AHA and BHA, the treatment can be repeated after few weeks and it is even recommended to be done more than once, as when it comes to mild substances, perseverance is the key of success. Things are different with medium and strong substances, which can be done only once a year.

Chemical peels not only make the skin look better, but it also brings back confidence in people's hearts'. So if you feel ashamed to go out of your house because of the way your skin looks like, go make an appointment for a chemical peel as soon as possible. You will see that looking great will raise your spirits instantaneously.