



PICO Procedure Post-Treatment Care

What to Expect After Treatment

- **Redness and mild swelling** in the treated area are common and typically subside within a few hours to 48 hours. The treated area may feel sunburnt for a few hours after treatment
- **Darkening of pigment** (freckles, sunspots, melasma) may occur before flaking or fading. The treated pigment may appear darker immediately and within the first few days following treatment. The darkened pigment will flake off like dry skin within 7-10 days. Avoid picking or scratching the treated skin
- **Mild sensitivity or warmth** similar to a sunburn may be felt. There are no restrictions on bathing except to treat the skin gently, for the first 24 hours

Post-Treatment Care Instructions

First 24-48 Hours

- Keep the skin **clean and dry**; using a gentle cleanser like CeraVe, Cetaphil or La Roche Posay. After washing, gently pat with a clean towel.
- Use a gentle moisturizer like **Cicalfate, Aquaphor, Vaseline, or Cetaphil cream** to soothe the skin. Keep the skin moisturized and do not let it dry out
- Avoid makeup or active skincare products until the skin settles.
- Avoid sun exposure for 2-weeks to reduce the chance of hyperpigmentation (darker pigmentation). Apply sunscreen (SPF 50) every 2 hours while in the sun

Days 3 - 5

- Continue with gentle cleanser and moisturizer. **Do not use retinoids, glycolic acid, salicylic acid, or vitamin C.** Continue daily **broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 50)** to protect results and prevent new pigmentation
- If pigment darkens or forms fine crusts/flakes, **do not pick, scrub, or exfoliate**
- **Avoid sun exposure** and wear a hat or protective clothing if outside

After Day 7

- Continue daily **broad-spectrum sunscreen (SPF 50)** to protect results and prevent new pigmentation
- You may resume regular skincare as long as your skin is healing well

When to Contact Us Call the office if you experience:

- Prolonged redness, swelling, or discomfort beyond 72 hours
- Blistering, crusting, or yellow drainage (signs of infection)
- Severe itching or rash
- Fever or chills

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: How long is recovery time?

A: Most patients experience mild redness or sensitivity for 1–3 days. Flaking or pigmentation changes may last up to 7 days.

Q: When can I wear makeup again?

A: After 24–48 hours, once redness and heat have subsided and no open skin is present.

Q: Can I go back to work the next day?

A: Yes. Most patients resume regular activities immediately, though visible redness or darkening may persist for 1–3 days.

Q: How many treatments will I need?

A: It varies by condition. Pigmentation may need 1–3 sessions. Acne scars typically require 3–6+ spaced treatments.

Q: Will my pigment get darker before it fades?

A: Yes. This is normal and part of the fading process. Pigmented spots often darken temporarily before exfoliating or fading over 1–2 weeks.

Q: Is there anything I should avoid?

A: Yes. Avoid sun exposure, saunas, hot tubs, and sweating heavily for 48–72 hours. Avoid active skincare unless cleared by your provider.

Q: When will I see results?

A: Results are often visible within 1–2 weeks for pigmentation.