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**Tetra CO2 Laser**

*The Tetra CO2 Laser is a fractional resurfacing device that removes layers of skin tissue in a fractionated method – columns of skin are removed, leaving the skin surrounding each column intact to aid in healing. This treatment helps reduce sun-damage, fine lines, wrinkles, scarring, uneven coloration, textural irregularities, dullness, and skin laxity.*

What to expect

* Prior to your treatment, the provider will cleanse the treatment area and apply topical numbing for optimal comfort.
* Once the treatment area is numb, the provider will prep your skin for treatment.
* During the treatment, you may feel a warm snapping sensation, followed by an *extremely* warm sensation for several hours after. Some clients may experience pin-point bleeding depending on the aggressiveness and depth of the treatment.
* Redness is normal and expected and will improve with each day.
* Pinpoint bleeding may occur. This can last for a few hours to a day.
* Swelling is common and expected and will continue to decrease with time.
* After 2-3 days your skin may become dry and flaky. Typically, this will resolve after 7 days.
* Results will be apparent 1 week after your treatment but will continue to improve over the next 90 days.
* Average number of treatments vary depending on the skin condition and concerns.

Pre-Treatment

* Avoid sun exposure, tanning beds, and sunless tanner in the area being treated for 4 weeks. *Presenting with a tan will result in rescheduling of treatment.*
* Dark hair that is present in the area to be treated should be shaved or clipped.
* Discontinue photosensitizing and topical medications (AHA/BHA, hydroquinone, retinols/retinoid, Tazorac, Differin, etc.) to the area for 7 days prior to treatment.
* Discontinue anti-inflammatory/blood thinning medications (Omega 3/Fish Oil, Aspirin, NSAIDS/Ibuprofen/Naproxen/Advil/Motrin, Ginkgo Biloba/Ginseng/St. John’s Wort, Vitamin E/Herbal supplements) for 5 days prior to treatment.
* Avoid injectables, chemical peels, and other laser treatments for approximately 2 weeks prior.
* Notify provider if you have a history of cold sores or acne breakouts prior to scheduling.
* We recommend taking an OTC antihistamine such as Claritin or Zyrtec 24 hours prior to your procedure to help alleviate potential swelling after your procedure.

Post-Treatment

* Cold compresses may provide comfort immediately after treatment.
* Allow skin to heal and don’t put further stress on your skin. Use a gentle cleanser and keep skin moisturized and out of the sun until the skin is fully healed. We encourage clients to continue to use SPF 30+ whenever outdoors.
* If you experience any pinpoint bleeding, dab the areas with damp gauze.
* To avoid further swelling, you may choose to sleep in an upright position the first two nights after the treatment. The first morning after treatment is when swelling is more prevalent, especially under the eyes. Swelling may last 2-4 days. We recommend that all our clients take an OTC Claritin or Zyrtec in the morning and Benadryl at night to reduce post-procedure swelling.
* As your skin heals your skin will be very dry and begin to flake and peel. Keep your skin well moisturized to support the healing process.
* For general post-treatment discomfort, an OTC oral pain reliver, i.e. Extra Strength Tylenol or Ibuprofen can be taken. If an anti-viral was prescribed, continue to take as directed.
* Avoid picking, scratching, and itching, as scarring and pigmentation complications can occur. Itching can be relieved by OTC oral Benadryl.
* Most clients are typically healed within 7-14 days depending on the depth and aggressiveness of the treatment.

Post-Treatment Skin Care

* Cleansing:
	+ Cleanse the skin two times a day with plain, lukewarm water and a gentle cleanser starting the following day after your treatment. Use your hands and use a gentle patting motion. Do NOT rub, scrub, use an exfoliant or a skin care brush.
* Moisturizer:
	+ Moisturizer should be applied generously over treated area and reapplied whenever your skin feels dry or tight. Do NOT pick at your skin, this will reduce the risk of post procedure complications.
* Sunscreen:
	+ Sunscreen is a MUST and should be used daily beginning the day of treatment and used consistently for up to 3 months post procedure. Use a SPF with Broadband UVA and UVB protection and a SPF of 30. Ensure to reapply during sun exposure.
* Tips & Tricks:
	+ Make-up can typically be worn once the peeling process is complete or 24 hours post treatment, if desired.
	+ Wear a wide-brimmed hat or clothing for 2 months post treatment to avoid blistering, scarring, hyperpigmentation, and hypopigmentation.
	+ When showering, avoid getting shampoo directly on the treated area.
	+ Avoid strenuous exercise and sweating until after skin has healed.

Complications/Risks

* Scarring – Hypertrophic and Non-hypertrophic
* Burns – from superficial to full thickness
* Extensive tissue destruction
* Ulcerations
* Hyperpigmentation or Hypopigmentation
* Induced bruising or petechiae formation
* Severe edema
* There may be some degree of swelling immediately post-treatment, however if you experience excessive swelling or any of the following signs of infection, you should contact the office immediately. Signs of infection include:
	+ Drainage – looks like pus
	+ Increased warmth at or around the treated area
	+ Fever of 101.5 of higher
	+ Extreme itching

Considerations

* Anticoagulant medications that may hinder coagulation, or have predisposition to bruising
* Undefined lesions
* Susceptible to Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation (PIH)
* Fillers or injectables

Contraindications

* Actively tanning or recent UV exposure
* Pregnancy
* Isotretinoin (Accutane) use within the past year.
* History of keloid scar formations
* Immunocompromised or have compromised healing
* Using long-standing systemic steroids (Prednisone, Dexamethasone)
* Infectious disease
* Connective tissue disease