

# QnA Cosmetic Surgery

148 West Pine Street  
Ponchatoula, LA 70454  
(985) 370-0662 Ext. 4

## INFORMED CONSENT FOR CO<sub>2</sub> LASER SKIN RESURFACING

### I DECLARE THAT I UNDERSTAND THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

The goal of CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgery is to reduce or partially eliminate facial wrinkles or reduce scarring from skin conditions such as acne. Typically, the results of CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing demonstrate improvement in the smoothness of the skin; however, a complete elimination of wrinkles or scarring is not a realistic expectation.

### Possible Intra-operative Complications of CO<sub>2</sub> Laser Skin Resurfacing Surgery

1. **Blindness/Corneal Burns**--There is a risk of accidental eye injury by the laser energy or beam which could cause blindness or burns of the eyeball. This is unlikely since complete eye protection is provided at all times during the laser energy applications.
2. **Flash Fires**--Utilization of laser energy always raises the possibility of fire-related incidents. These are rare because of the careful maintenance of the surgical equipment and stringent laser safety precautions.

### Possible Short-term Effects of CO<sub>2</sub> Laser Skin Resurfacing Surgery

Anesthetic is usually used to block pain during the treatment, but some degree of discomfort may be experienced.

1. **Pain**--As the aesthetic effects wear off, you may feel a slight discomfort or a burning sensation to the treated area. This is normal for the first few days after your procedure.
2. **Redness of Skin** --erythema (redness of the skin) for a two to six month period or possibly longer.
3. **Swelling**--temporary edema (swelling) or ecchymosis (bruising) of the tissue of the face and neck, usually subsiding in three to seven days.
4. **Wound healing**--oozing, weeping, crusting, and flakiness of the treated area, usually persisting for one to four weeks.
5. **Skin thickening**--textural changes of the treated skin, such as skin thickening, which may persist for a variable time following the laser skin resurfacing treatment.
6. **Cysts**--milia or cysts, especially in the eyelid skin region (if the eyelid skin is included in the area of treatment by the laser energy), particularly if ointments were used in the post-operative phase for a protracted period.
7. **Skin tightness**--sensation of skin tightness (peaks at 3-8 weeks post-operatively).
8. **Allergic rashes** to topical preparations (ointments) used post-operatively.

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9. **Herpes simplex dermatitis (fever blisters)**--occurrence or recurrence of herpes simplex dermatitis, particularly if not pre-, intra-, and post-operatively treated with a systemic anti-viral medication such as Zovirax.
10. **Skin itchiness**--pruritis or itching in the early healing phase.
11. **Skin hyperpigmentation**--transient hyperpigmentation (darkening of the skin), especially in darker-skinned people, occurring three to eight weeks after laser therapy.
12. **Skin infections**--infection of the skin and soft tissues, especially if careful post-operative hygiene is not practiced.
13. **Skin hypopigmentation**--lightening of the skin which occurs because of laser-induced injury to the melanocytes (pigment-containing cells in the skin) and which can be permanent.

### **Possible Long-term Complications of CO<sub>2</sub> Laser Skin Resurfacing Surgery**

1. **Increased susceptibility to sun sensitivity**--Because of the permanent thinning of the epidermis and dermis and reduction in the number of melanocytes (pigment cells in the skin), there is a probability of a life-long risk of greater sun sensitivity of CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfaced areas to the photo-aging effects of sunlight and the carcinogenic (cancer-producing) effects of ultraviolet wavelengths inherent in sun exposure or the use of tanning devices. For these reasons, avoidance of sun exposure or protection against ultraviolet light damage to your skin by the use of sun-screening or sun-blocking lotions with SPF (sun-protective factor) of 30 or higher is strongly advised.
2. **Scarring**--The risk of scarring exists in all cases. It is variable and is often related to an individual's genetic makeup. Scarring can be reduced by carefully following appropriate aftercare instructions and notifying the physician if a problem develops.
3. **Skin Pigment Changes**--Skin color and texture changes may occur. At the junction of the treated and untreated areas, there may be a difference in color, texture, and/or thickness of the skin.
4. **Infection**--There is always a risk of infection with any invasive or surgical procedure. It is minimized by proper surgical technique and proper post-operative care.
5. **Ectropion**--Cicatricial (scarring or shrinkage), ectropion (out-turning of the eyelid), and/or punctal (tear hole) eversion can occur, despite optimal surgical technique.
6. **Blepharoptosis**--Blepharoptosis (drooping of the eyelid) can result from inadvertent injury to structures in the upper eyelid, especially in thin-skinned people.

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## PATIENT CONSENT

I understand that exposure to the sun and excess heat must be avoided by all means for a period of 6 months. No unprotected sun bathing is permitted for 6 months. To do so would encourage skin pigment changes and rhytids (wrinkles) necessitating further treatment.

I understand this is an elective procedure and that CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgery is not reversible.

I understand the practice of medicine and surgery is not an exact science, and I acknowledge that no guarantees have been made to me concerning the results from the procedure. *It is not possible to state every complication that may occur as a result of CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgery.* Complications or a poor outcome may manifest weeks, months, or even years after CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgery.

CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgery and its risks, benefits, and alternatives have been explained to me by the QnA Cosmetic Surgery physician \_\_\_\_\_ and/or associates and all my questions about the CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgical procedure have been answered. I therefore consent to having CO<sub>2</sub> laser skin resurfacing surgery.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Patient Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date