

## Skin Care Following Laser Treatment

1. Keep the site clean. Gentle cleansing twice a day with a mild soap is helpful.
2. If blisters or scabs occur after treatment, avoid cosmetics on or near the treated area until they are cleared.
3. Strictly avoid sun exposure to the site, by keeping the area covered with clothing or with a dressing (eg. a bandaid).
4. If the treated area develops blisters or scabs, apply Polysporin ointment (or Bactroban or Bacitracin ointment) twice a day for 4–7 days. You may want to cover the area with a loose sterile, non-stick dressing such as Telfa.
5. Do not attempt to remove scabs, scaling or crust by force since this can cause scarring. These will fall off naturally within 1–2 weeks.
6. If you notice a lot of facial swelling, sleep with your head and shoulders raised on a pillow to help decrease the swelling. Cold compresses will also help reduce the swelling.
7. For discomfort Tylenol should be adequate.
8. If any problems such as pain, bleeding, or infection (redness or drainage after 48 hours) occur, please call the Lions Laser Skin Centre at 604-875-4682 or 604-875-5151. For emergencies after office hours and on weekends, please contact your Laser Surgeon (phone number listed in the White Pages).

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# Vascular Green Lasers For Red Birthmarks and Unwanted Blood Vessels

## Patient's Guide



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## **The Long Pulse Green Vascular Laser**

The long pulse green vascular laser is an advanced system used to treat vascular (red) skin lesions. A brief pulse of green laser light heats and destroys abnormal blood vessels found in port wine stains and telangiectases (often referred to as “broken veins” or “spider veins”) This light is used in combination with a chilled-tip delivery device which applies active cooling to protect the skin surface while minimizing patient discomfort. The design of this laser allows treatment of blood vessels on any skin surface with decreased side effects such as bruising and scarring.

### **Before your Treatment**

At your first visit, we will discuss your skin type, the size of the area to be treated and your expectations from treatment. After your condition has been assessed and treatment discussed, you will be required to sign a consent form, as with any medical procedure. All make-up must be removed prior to treatment. The treatment area will be photographed.

### **During your Treatment**

If the area to be treated is large, test patches may be recommended to determine the dose of light that will produce the best result; smaller lesions may be treated fully at the first visit. The laser light is delivered to the lesion through a flexible hand piece, which is held by the physician. A gel is applied to the skin to improve cooling and contact of the laser with the skin. You will feel the cold chilled-tip against your skin and the laser exposures will feel like an elastic being snapped against the skin. Everyone in the room must wear protective eye wear. The length of each treatment session depends on the size of the area to be treated.

## **After Your Treatment**

Immediately after the treatment, the area may look pink or slightly bruised with mild swelling. In some cases, blisters may form in the treated area or the area may look like a cat scratch with crusting. These should resolve in about 10 days. If blisters occur, apply a topical antibiotic ointment twice a day and avoid cosmetics for as long as blisters are present to reduce the possibility of infection. It may take 6–8 weeks before the full benefit of treatment is seen.

### **Follow-up**

The second visit will be two to three months later in order to allow sufficient time for the lesion to fade. Any subsequent treatments are carried out at intervals no sooner than every two to three months. Sometimes more than one treatment may be necessary for the vessel to be removed.

### **Outcome**

Most patients with port wine stains experience a satisfactory lightening response from this treatment. Several treatments are often needed to achieve significant lightening. Most patients with “spider” or “broken” veins on the face and chest also experience good to excellent results. The long pulse green vascular laser is not a good treatment option for varicose veins. If you have any problems or concerns contact your dermatologist.

### **Questions**

We will be happy to answer any questions during your consultation visit.