

# The Dos and Don'ts of Treating Skin Before and After Laser Treatments

What you should and shouldn't do.



Alexis Chestnov

July 27, 2015

Lasers are one of the hottest corrective and anti-aging trends. They work to turn back the clock and undo damage by reducing the appearances of fine lines, uneven skin tones and scars, just to name a few. Pre- and post-laser treatment, however, you need to take extra precaution with your skin to avoid any damage, so we've conversed with the experts to find out the dos and don'ts to keep your skin healthy amid all lasers.

**Do** avoid sun exposure. "The sun excites pigment cells in the skin and can cause scarring," says New York dermatologist Lance Brown, MD. Moreover, skin is more sensitive after laser treatments and is prone to sunburns.

**Don't** exfoliate, especially post-treatment. "The skin is often raw and inflamed after laser treatment," New York dermatologist Gary Goldenberg, MD, explains. "Exfoliating can make that worse." So, instead of scrubbing your dead skin cells away, focus on letting your skin heal.

**Do** moisturize. For better results, maintaining hydrated skin throughout the laser process is of the utmost importance. As an added tip, Dr. Goldenberg suggests, "If the skin feels hot, put the moisturizer in the fridge before use. Use one with sunscreen in the morning."

**Don't** use retinoids. They work to remove the top layer of the skin, which is great for treating signs of aging and acne, but using them before or after laser treatments makes your skin super susceptible to irritation.

**Do** use arnica. A natural ingredient, arnica can be taken before and after laser treatments to reduce bruising.