

Glycolic Acid – The Superficial Peel

What is it?

Glycolic Acid is one of the natural occurring fruit acids derived from sugar cane. Already in the Middle Ages, fruit acid peels were used to smoothen and brighten the face. Modern science has purified the active ingredients of fruit acid and they are called “Alpha Hydroxy Acids”. The one that we are using is Glycolic Acid. When it is applied to the skin it creates a smoother brighter face which is a characteristic of youthful skin.

What does it do?

Glycolic acid works on the outer layer of the skin called the epidermis to cause its natural exfoliation to become regular. The most superficial layer of the epidermis, the Stratum Corneum, is called keratin. This becomes more uniform and less clumpy after a peel, giving the skin a smoother feeling.

Working in the deeper layers of the epidermis, age spots, hyper pigmentation and fine lines, especially under the eyes are softened and the appearance of the skin is improved. Large pores caused by clogged keratin shrink with the release of the keratin plug. Blackheads will disappear and acne treatments may be enhanced. The fruit acid stimulates blood flow through the skin, which creates a brighter face.

How does it work?

A peel solution of 35%, 50%, or 70% Glycolic Acid not only works on the superficial layer of the skin but also penetrates into the active live epidermis causing skin to smoothen and brighten in appearance. Maintenance with glycolic acid cream is important as this causes the skin to remain smooth and moist between treatments.

The peeling procedure

For best results, a series of 3-6 peels should be preformed in sequences no more than 2 to three weeks apart. In between the peels, Glycolic Acid cream should be applied twice daily to increase the effectiveness of the peel. The series can be repeated up to four times a year depending on the response from your skin. The results of a peel are more noticeable after the second or third peel. No anesthetic is required as patients feel only a slight tingling sensation during the treatment.

Immediate after care

At the time of peeling, you will see a hint of redness, depending on your skins reaction. For up to five days, there may be some exfoliation or flakiness. Occasionally, in more sensitive skin there may be some areas of scabbing. Applying a warm washcloth to your face in the morning and at night, then applying a very thin layer of Vaseline to very dry skin can minimize this effect. The gentle use of a facial buff-puff scrub is often helpful in removing the flaking skin caused by the peel. This will help the skin to heal and rejuvenate more quickly. By the seventh day your skin should appear normal and the next treatment can be repeated within a week or two. To maintain the skins appearance peel series should be repeated at least 3 times a year depending on your skin type.