

## Microdermabrasion

Microdermabrasion is a fast, non-invasive procedure that gently resurfaces the skin. It can help improve the appearance of roughly-textured skin, fine wrinkles, superficial scars, uneven pigmentation, and age spots. It may also be used to assist in the treatment of other skin conditions, such as acne.

Microdermabrasion gently removes damaged skin by “sand blasting” the top layers of the skin with tiny crystals. This removes the outermost layer of skin (“exfoliation”) and exposes the newer skin cell below. This also stimulates the growth of new skin cells below, leading to more youthful-appearing skin.

Microdermabrasion is usually performed on the face and neck, but can be performed on any part of the body. It can be used on all types of skin and complexions, including oily, dry, light and dark skin. Microdermabrasion may be used alone or in combination with other procedures such as chemical peels.

The procedure usually needs to be performed multiple times to obtain satisfactory results. A typical regimen involves four to eight treatments, at intervals of one to three weeks. Your dermatologist will recommend a regimen best suited for your needs. The procedure does not involve any serious, known risks. The procedure is usually considered painless so no anesthesia is required, although some people with particularly sensitive skin may complain of mild irritation.

Microdermabrasion is sometimes referred to as “the lunchtime peel” because the procedure is so fast and there is no recovery time required. You can easily fit the procedure into an hour-long break. Your skin may turn pink immediately after the procedure, but this usually fades within just a few hours.

- The procedure itself lasts 15-30 minutes and involves these simple steps:
- You are given goggles to protect your eyes from the fine crystals
- Your skin is gently cleansed.
- The device is held closely over the skin
- When turned on, the device begins to spray fine crystals onto a small area of skin
- The device also vacuums up the crystals and loosened skin cells so there is minimal dust and debris.

Make sure to tell your dermatologist if you are taking any medication, especially isotretinoin (Accutane), or if you have a history of cold sores or “fever blisters”. You may be asked to stop using aspirin, anti-coagulants, or other medications that might adversely impact the way your skin heals. If you have a history of cold sores, an anti-viral medication may be recommended.

You should be particularly careful to use a sunblock daily after microdermabrasion to protect the newly exposed and sensitive skin.