

ERBIUM PRE + POST CARE

Before Your Treatment — Pre-Care Instructions

- Discontinue active ingredients — Stop retinol, tretinoin, benzoyl peroxide, and all exfoliating products for at least 7-10 days prior.
- Avoid sun exposure — Stay out of direct sun and avoid tanning beds for a minimum of 2 weeks prior. Treating sun-damaged or tanned skin significantly increases the risk of hyperpigmentation and complications.
- Manage cold sore history — Erbium laser can trigger a herpes outbreak even in those with no recent history. Notify your provider — an antiviral medication is typically prescribed starting 1-2 days before treatment.
- Avoid blood-thinning medications & supplements — If medically safe to do so, avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, fish oil, vitamin E, and alcohol for at least 7 days before to minimize bleeding and bruising.
- No waxing, threading, chemical peels, microneedling, and laser hair removal for at least 2-4 weeks beforehand.
- Arrange to take time off work — downtime is typically 7-14 days depending on treatment depth.
- Arrive with a clean face — Come with no makeup, sunscreen, or skincare products on the day of your appointment.
- Disclose full medical history — Inform your provider of all medications, supplements, skin conditions, history of keloid scarring, autoimmune conditions, recent sun exposure, or isotretinoin (Accutane) use within the past 6 months.

After Your Treatment — Post-Care Instructions

- Expect significant downtime — Redness, swelling, oozing, and peeling are normal parts of the healing process. Skin typically feels raw for the first few days and continues to peel and resurface for 7-14 days.
- Keep the skin moist — Apply a thick, gentle healing ointment (such as Aquaphor or as directed by your provider) consistently to keep treated skin moist. Do not allow the skin to dry out or crust — this prolongs healing and increases scarring risk.
- Cleanse very gently — Use only lukewarm water and a gentle, fragrance-free cleanser as directed by your provider. Pat dry with a clean, soft cloth — never rub. You may also use a hypochlorous acid spray such as Puracyn instead of a cleanser.
- Apply SPF frequently — Once healed, use SPF 30-50 every single day without exception. Freshly resurfaced skin is highly vulnerable to UV-induced hyperpigmentation and must be protected for several months post-treatment.
- Do not pick or peel — Allow skin to shed completely on its own. Picking, peeling, or scratching can cause permanent scarring and hyperpigmentation.
- Do not wear makeup for 72 hours.
- Take prescribed medications — If prescribed antiviral, antibiotic, or anti-inflammatory medications, complete the full course.
- Sleep with head elevated — Use an extra pillow for the first several nights to help reduce swelling.
- Avoid all active skincare — Do not reintroduce retinol, AHAs, BHAs, vitamin C, or any exfoliants until your provider gives the all-clear — typically after 4 weeks or once skin is fully healed.
- Stay out of the sun — Avoid direct sun exposure for a minimum of 4 weeks post-treatment. When outdoors, wear a wide-brimmed hat and SPF on all exposed areas.
- Stay hydrated — Drink plenty of water throughout the healing process to support skin regeneration from the inside out.

Contact your provider immediately if you experience:

- Fever, chills, or flu-like symptoms during healing
- Signs of infection: increasing pain, warmth, pus, or unusual odor
- Blistering beyond mild surface-level peeling

- Cold sore outbreak or unusual crusting around the mouth
- Prolonged redness or discoloration lasting beyond 4–6 weeks
- Any scarring, raised texture, or skin changes that concern you

The healing process can feel uncomfortable and the initial appearance of skin may be alarming — this is completely normal. Full results, including improvements in texture, tone, and fine lines, are typically visible at 3 months, once the skin has fully healed and new collagen production begins. Results continue to improve for up to 6 months post-treatment. Multiple treatments may be required.