



CO2 Treatment Post-Care Instructions:

Day 1, expect moderate to severe swelling, particularly around the eyes. It is important during this time to:

- Practice head elevation
- Use cold saline soaks
- Frequent application of protective ointment
- Gentle cleansing with vinegar or saline soaks
- Strict sun avoidance
- Hydration

Immediate Post-Care (First 3–5 Days)

- **Cold Compresses:** Apply cool (not ice-cold) saline-soaked gauze or gel packs for 10–15 minutes several times per day to reduce swelling.
- **Head Elevation:** Sleep on 2–3 pillows or in a recliner to minimize fluid accumulation in the face.
- **Gentle Cleansing:** Use diluted vinegar soaks (e.g., 1 tsp white vinegar in 1 cup cooled sterile water) or saline soaks 3–4× daily, then gently pat dry.
- **Barrier Ointment:** Keep skin continuously coated with a thin layer of Aquaphor and/or supplied post-care ointment. Never let the skin dry out at this stage.
- **No Picking/Peeling:** Let the skin naturally shed. Picking increases infection and scarring risk.

After the First Several Days (Days 5–10)

- **Transition to Gentle Creams:** Once oozing/crusting resolves, switch from ointments to bland moisturizers with no active retinols or acids.
- **Sun Protection:** Absolutely critical. Broad-spectrum SPF 30–50 once re-epithelialized. Wear a wide-brim hat outdoors.
- **Avoid Makeup:** Until the skin barrier is intact — usually after day 7–10.

Medications & Support

- Antivirals (if prescribed): Continue valacyclovir/acyclovir prophylaxis if ordered.
- Pain/Swelling: Short course of NSAIDs or acetaminophen if needed. Some providers prescribe a brief taper of oral steroids if swelling is extreme.
- Antibiotics: Only if provider prescribed (not routine unless risk factors).

Warning Signs Requiring Provider Call

- Fever, chills, spreading redness beyond treated area.
- Yellow/green discharge or foul odor.
- Sudden increase in pain after initial improvement.
- Persistent or worsening swelling beyond 5–6 days.