

LeDerm Laser Medical Aesthetics

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Retinoids and Sun Considerations

Part of Fruit on the Beach ©

The benefits of using retinoids for improving skin photo-aging as well as reversing some of the abnormal skin growths are well documented. However and as usual there is a significant amount of mis-information on the web regarding it's use. Let's review the proper use of retinoids and additionally, we will give you our best recommendations for summer use:

1. See a clinician for a proper skin analysis and prescription
2. Avoid retinoids if you are pregnant.
3. Start off slowly with an application of your prescribed dosage 3 nights a week for 2 weeks (M-W-F). Add an additional application night every 2 weeks until you are ultimately applying your cream every night.
4. Apply only the prescribed dosage - a pea size and no more.
5. Apply ONLY at night and once a night. It will minimize your sensitivity.
6. Wash and dry your face before application. Let your skin dry for at least 20 minutes before your application. Wet skin speeds the absorption and can cause more irritation.
7. Wait 10 minutes after your retinoid application and before applying moisturizer.
8. See your clinician for a skin check 2 weeks after starting.
9. Continuous use is important to achieving results. If you start and stop, start and stop it will not work at all. You'll just end up with irritated red skin for a longer period then need be.
10. When your wrinkles have diminished go on a maintenance dose of every other night or 3rd night, you will still derive the same benefit.

Summer Recommendation for Retinoid use:

This is going to sound harsh but consider it tough love - If you are not going to bother using sun screen - don't even think about using your Retinoid -period! You are putting your skin at risk and you are contradicting the reason you are using retinoids, to reduce the aging process.

If you know you are going to be in the sun for long exposures avoid using your retinoid a few days before and definitely follow our general sun protection guidelines applying your sun screen often (every 2 hours)

If you are unsure of what to do, check with us or your prescribing clinician.

Recent studies indicate that topical vitamin A when exposed to the sun can increase your risk of sun damage and in some cases skin cancer. We recommend that you avoid using sun screens with any vitamin A additives. Summer is not the time to begin retinoid use. If you are already on it, your skin has acclimated and since you are applying it at night you are in good shape.

Any treatment that causes inflammation or redness in your skin, should be done at least several days before you go to the beach. If the skin is irritated from treatments, you could burn more

easily. We recommend no sun bathing for several days before or after laser treatments, waxing or exfoliation treatments. Wednesday is a great day for treatments.