

# *Dr. Michele Zormeirer*

## **PHOTOFACIAL PATIENT GUIDE**

**PhotoFacial** is an innovative procedure using Intense Pulsed Light and/or laser technologies to treat the signs of sun damaged, aging skin, including undesirable cosmetic symptoms of rosacea. It can reduce redness in the face, neck and chest, as well as unsightly vessels, resulting in a more youthful appearance of the skin.

**What causes red faces?** As many as 70 million Americans have an undesirable redness of the face, known as rosacea. This is a common, chronic condition of the skin characterized by flushing and dilated blood vessels and can be accompanied by pustules and swelling. The redness or flush is the most difficult element of this condition to treat because it comes from beneath the skin. A wide variety of physiological factors trigger vessels to dilate or open, causing the flushed or red appearance. Often the vessels become permanently dilated. This causes the constant red face seen in so many rosacea patients. External stimuli, such as heat, cold, caffeine, alcohol, spicy foods, stress, and sun exposure, can contribute to or worsen symptoms. Rosacea does not have one cause, however, genetic tendency appears to be a contributing factor to the onset of this condition. The disease may occur in anyone, but fair skinned individuals of northern European descent most frequently experience symptoms of rosacea.

**How does PhotoFacial help treat rosacea?** Until now, no successful treatment existed to significantly reduce the symptoms of rosacea. Using the VascuLight™ Intense Pulsed Light and laser PhotoFacial treatments, it is possible to decrease the flushing associated with this condition, resulting in decline in frequency and severity of breakouts. The goal of PhotoFacial is to destroy the multiple vessels that have developed secondary to genetics or sun damage. Once the vessels are removed or reduced in size and number, the flushing and bruising tends to decrease.

**How does the treatment work?** Using Intense Pulsed Light and a Nd:YAG laser source, PhotoFacial targets vessels in a specific way. The light emitted by the machine targets the color in the vessels. The light waves then are converted to heat energy, which damages the walls of the vessels, resulting in their destruction and absorption by the body. The unique nature of emission of the laser and Intense Pulsed Light make it possible to find even the smallest vessels. Additionally, the treatments help to strengthen the collagen layer of the skin, providing a smoother, tighter look. A series of five treatments are performed at three-week intervals for optimal results. Specific treatment parameters are selected so there is not significant downtime following the procedures.

**How much improvement can I expect?** Most patients show an overall improvement in the signs of rosacea, ranging from moderate to a high rate of

success, with up to 80% improvement. Results depend on a patient's physiological flushing tendency, the severity of the condition and the amount of previous sun damage of the skin.

**Can other conditions be treated with PhotoFacial?** PhotoFacial treatments are an effective treatment for the signs of photo aging of the skin, such as pigmentation from sun exposure (age spots), irregularities in skin texture, large pores and acne scarring. It is also used to diminish fine lines around the eyes and mouth.

**Will I need additional treatments?** Many patients benefit from additional treatments in order to address residual redness or vessels. It is recommended that such sessions be scheduled six to eight weeks after the fifth PhotoFacial. Long-term results may last for years, and are based on individual genetic tendencies. Proper skin care can reduce the need for future treatments.

**What are examples of conditions that PhotoFacial will not be effective on?** PhotoFacial is not a treatment for skin cancer, but may treat precancerous actinic keratosis. It will not remove moles, but may remove some of their pigment. It is also not effective for seborrhea keratosis. PhotoFacial is not a substitute for a facelift and will not improve sagging skin, nor will it affect frown lines or other expression lines.

**Are there any contraindications to these procedures?** PhotoFacial is not recommended for patients with connective tissue disease, autoimmune and bleeding disorders, patients taking anticoagulants, and those that are pregnant. This treatment is not performed on patients with recently tanned skin or those who may receive excessive sun exposure for three weeks after a treatment. All patients must wear a daily sunscreen with a titanium or zinc block and SPF of 30-50. Patients currently taking Accutane are not candidates for Photo Facial until six months after the medication has been stopped. Other contraindications are active acne cysts, highly active rosacea breakouts, and those with large pustules or fever blister and cold sores. If you are diabetic or are taking medication that increases your sensitivity to sunlight, please consult with the doctor to determine if you are a candidate for this treatment.

**Are there any side effects?** Most side effects are mild and of short duration. Some discomfort may occur during and after the treatment. There is usually additional redness immediately following treatment, lasting less than 24 hours in most instances. On rare occasions, this may persist up to three days. Mild blistering and bruising is possible, occurring in less than 5% of patients, and normally clears very quickly. Although rare, post treatment pigmentation changes have been observed on occasion and can easily be treated. We have never seen a scar or an infection of the skin after treatment but it is possible. Swelling for one to five days occurs in some cases. It is most common in

severely sun damaged skin, due to reduced quality of connective tissue around the blood vessels.

**Can individuals with low pain threshold or sensitivity skin still be treated?**

Yes. We have extensive experience with patients that have sensitive skin and make sure treatment will be comfortable and safe. Most patients need no pre-treatment topical anesthetic, but it may be applied 30 minutes prior to the treatment to alleviate discomfort.

**Who administers PhotoFacial treatments?** Trained physicians, registered nurses, nurse practitioners and physician assistants can legally perform this procedure.

**How long does each treatment last?** A PhotoFacial treatment takes approximately 20 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the area being treated. Prior to your appointment, all makeup or creams must be removed. Men will be asked to shave on the day of the treatment prior to their arrival at the office. If any herpetic lesion, bacterial infection, or severe acne or rosacea are noted on the day of the procedure, the treatment will be canceled until the condition has been treated and completely healed or resolve.

**Does laser resurfacing accomplish the same results as PhotoFacial?** Laser resurfacing may diminish fine lines and pigmentation, but it does not affect or remove blood vessels or flushing. It may leave you unsightly and usually requires time away from work and your daily activities. The downtime may be two weeks or more, and you may have a few months of redness in the treated areas. Laser resurfacing has a valuable place in the treatment of certain conditions of the face; it is not substitute for PhotoFacial.

**What are the advantages of PhotoFacial treatments?** This treatment will produce glowing, smoother skin with a reduction in redness, visible vessels and fine lines with no downtime from activities. No other procedure has been developed that can accomplish so much with such low risk and no downtime.

**Do chemical peels or Microdermabrasion get the same results?** Neither peels nor Microdermabrasion can obliterate or reduce blood vessels, which cause flushing. However, PhotoFacial treatments may be used in conjunction with Microdermabrasion and other treatments. Please inquire for details.

**Is it beneficial to have a PhotoFacial for pigmented areas from sun exposure, even without redness?** Pigmented area can be effectively treated with a photo rejuvenation program that incorporates the VascuLight™ PhotoFacial with other procedures. We also have specialized skin care programs using products expressly selected for the patient's skin type and condition.

**Can redness and sun damage on the neck and chest also be treated?** Yes, these areas can also be successfully treated. Many individuals, particularly women, are delighted to see improvement in the V-neck effect of sun damage that has accumulated from years of sun exposure.

**What is the cost of PhotoFacial treatments?** The cost varies according to the area being treated and will be discussed fully at the time of your consultation. The cost of PhotoFacial treatments is a fraction of that charges for a full-face laser resurfacing procedure.

**What is the next step?** All patients must have a consultation with a trained VascuLight™ nurse or doctor. Prior to beginning treatments, a general medical questionnaire describing the nature of your skin need to be completed. Once you have signed an informed consent sheet and photographic permit form, you are ready to be scheduled for your first treatment appointment.

Pretreatment photographs are taken when you begin your procedure. At this time, any additional questions or concerns will be addressed and answered. We begin the process by applying eye shields or goggles to protect the eyes from the bright light of the VascuLight™ machine. A cool, soothing water-based gel will be placed on the skin prior to treatment, which will help reduce discomfort. The machine has a gentle beep, which alerts you for the next pulse of light. Prior to the initial treatment, each patient is tested to properly evaluate the correct setting for their skin condition and type. These parameters are stored in a database and in the patient's chart as a guideline for future treatments.

After the procedure, you will be given a written home instruction sheet. It is very important to follow these instructions. All treatment packages are paid in full at the time of the first treatment. You will be asked to schedule your next appointment three weeks after a treatment. This schedule allows for optimal results. Dr. Zormeier will review you chart after each appointment. Periodically, she will drop in during your treatment in order to monitor your progress.

We hope you find this information helpful in making your decision about VascuLight™ PhotoFacial treatments. Dr. Zormeier and staff strive to provide the best possible care for patients. Your input and comments are welcome and valued. Please do not hesitate to call us with any comments, questions, or concerns.

# *Plastic Surgery and Laser Center*

## **PHOTOFACIAL AFTERCARE INSTRUCTIONS**

1. Mild swelling and/or redness can be expected and may last for one to three days. Cool compresses will reduce the discomfort.
2. A gentle cleanser should be used for the next three to five days (i.e. Cetaphil)
3. Markup may be applied as long as the skin is not broken. Makeup will also serve as a partial barrier from the sun.
4. Topical products containing glycolic acids, Retin-A, exfoliators or bleaching agents may be resumed in one to two days after treatment. Their use should be discontinued two to three days prior to your next treatment.
5. Sun block is required at all times to protect your skin, but is even more important while undergoing treatments. It must be worn, without fail, for three weeks before and three weeks after each treatment, regardless of the outside weather conditions. UV rays remain present and powerful during the winter months. Sun block containing zinc or titanium with SPF of 30 to 50 is preferred.
6. If you develop a blister or scab:
  - Wash gently
  - Apply antibiotic ointment twice daily (i.e. polysporin)
  - Avoid sun exposure
  - Call doctor for assistance! She is here to help you!
7. Avoid vigorous exercise for two to three days and airplane travel for 24 hours after treatment.
8. Patients should avoid hot baths and showers, saunas, and hot tubs for two to four days. Rosacea patients should avoid triggers like alcohol, caffeine, and spicy foods.
9. Please inform the doctor of any new diagnoses or changes in your medications prior to each treatment. Some medications are not compatible with Intense Pulsed Light and Laser treatments.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call.