

LASER TREATMENT OF DARK EYE CIRCLES

WHAT CAUSES DARK CIRCLES AROUND THE EYES?

Four factors are involved:

1. Excess skin/volume loss – these can be addressed by adding volume around the eye with either Restylan®e or Sculptra®, or taking out the excess skin by doing a blepharoplasty surgery.
2. Darkening of the skin around the eye from sun damage. Sometimes this can be helped with a bleaching cream or photofacial treatment.
3. Thinning of the skin – caused by sun damage. The skin around the eye is the thinnest in the body, so it is particularly susceptible to collagen and elastin loss which is characteristic of sun-damaged skin. As the skin gets thinner, the blood vessels under the skin become more obvious, making the skin look dark.
4. Large blood vessels coming from the scalp/temples that diverge and become obvious on the upper and lower eyelids.

HOW CAN LASER TREATMENTS HELP THIS PROBLEM?

By using a 1064nm laser which bypasses the top layer of the skin and goes deep where the blood vessels lie, we are able to close down the blood vessels so that they can't carry blood, therefore they won't look as dark.

DON'T I NEED THOSE BLOOD VESSELS?

No, there are plenty of deep veins to carry the blood back to the heart.

HOW DOES THE TREATMENT WORK?

The laser light gets converted to heat, which irritates the blood vessels. Inflamed blood vessels then will close down and not be able to carry the blood, so they won't look dark.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO PREPARE FOR THIS TREATMENT?

Anything which prevents blood from clotting or anything which prevents inflammation will interfere with the goal of the treatment. Therefore, for a week before treatment it is important to avoid alcohol, aspirin or aspirin containing products, and NSAIA's such as Motrin, Aleve, Naprosyn, Advil, etc. Apply the BLT anesthetic cream from the mid-face up to the scalp, since the veins must be treated all around the eye area and the forehead, since the veins which surround the eye come from the scalp. Take two Tylenol an hour before treatment to help with any potential discomfort.

HOW MANY TREATMENTS WILL I REQUIRE?

All patients are individuals, but it usually requires at least 3 separate treatments, approximately 10-14 days apart to achieve enough closure of the

blood vessels to make a demonstrable difference. Retreatment is “as needed” if and when the veins re-open.

WHAT CAN I DO TO MAKE THE TREATMENTS MOST EFFECTIVE?

During the entire 6-8 weeks of the treatment period, continue to avoid alcohol, aspirin, and NSAIA's since their use would be counterproductive to the treatment. Keeping the head elevated at night for several days after the treatments will help keep them closed so that they can heal closed. Also, avoiding excessive strenuous activities or anything that causes vasodilation, such as hot showers, Jacuzzi/steam rooms will help keep the vessels closed down. Using cold soaks after the treatment will help keep the vessels vasoconstricted so that they will close down more easily.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER THE TREATMENT?

There is a “deep heating” sensation during the procedure, as the laser light is pulled into the blood vessels and travels along them. After the treatment there may be some residual discomfort, usually easily treated with cold compresses and Tylenol. There may be some swelling since the blood vessels become inflamed, and rarely there may be some bruising or red spots. Infrequently a blister or transient dark spots may develop.