

Dr. Stacy J. Haynes, P.C.
Anniston Dermatology / Haynes Medi-Spa

TCA Chemical Peel

How Does a TCA Peel Work?

TCA (Trichloroacetic Acid) is a skin-resurfacing treatment: it removes dead skin cells, uncovering a “new” layer of skin that appears smoother and more vibrant. As a result, it softens fine lines, minimizes superficial “age” spots and other skin discolorations, and generally improves the tone and texture of your skin. TCA peels are also very popular for diminishing the appearance of acne scars.

More than one TCA treatment may be recommended. Treatments are usually spaced 2 to 4 weeks apart, for mild treatments. To increase their effectiveness, these peels are often combined with other skin-rejuvenating treatments, such as Microdermabrasion, Facials, Oxygen Therapy, Micro-Needling, Dermal Fillers, Lasers, etc.

Trichloroacetic acid (TCA) peels are considered medium-depth peels. They reach slightly deeper into the skin than alpha hydroxy acid (AHA) peels—and thus often produce stronger results.

These peels also have the advantage of being suitable for most skin types, including darker-toned skin. To avoid discoloration, however, people with dark brown skin may need to follow a pre-treatment protocol that could include treating the skin with alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) first. This step is generally needed for deeper peels.

For a peel that has similar results to a laser, indulge in a TCA peel. “The TCA peels really work by their acidity and they basically burn away the surface of the skin similar, to the way a superficial laser would. These peels range in concentration from a mild 30 percent to an intense 50 to 70 percent. When getting a chemical peel, remember that not all peels are created equal. Even though they are considered to be mild peels there are two things that really matter: the concentration of the peel and if it is neutralized or not.

*The more intense peels require one to two weeks of downtime until crusting heals so don't plan one the day before a big date or for that matter a beach vacation as you'll need to be vigilant with staying out of the sun immediately after the treatment.
The payoff: Smoother, younger, clearer more vibrant skin.*

Let It Be Known

Be cautious about getting any type of peel if:

- You're on Retin-A or using a retinol product. “Peels are going to have a much stronger effect and may even cause crusting, peeling and scabbing. Discuss with your doctor, nurse practitioner or aesthetician before hand if you're using one of these products.
- It's winter and your skin is dry. In the colder months, peels are going to have a much stronger effect and may cause adverse affects if you're not careful.
- You have a rash. A peel can aggravate the condition.
- You're a constant hat wearer. Putting on a hat immediately after a peel can cause the peel not to neutralize and you could wind up with a scar.

