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Blu U & Harmony AFT Acne Treatment INFORMATION & TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS

The exact cause of acne is not known. Multiple factors contribute to the development of acne such as the **interaction between hormonal, bacterial and inflammatory disturbances** at the level of the oil gland (pilosebaceous follicle). The oil gland produces more oil than normal and the content of the oil may be different. The opening of the oil gland swells and blocks the release of oil which results in whiteheads and blackheads (comedones). The bacteria **propionibacterium acnes** grows well in this oil and releases chemicals that attract white blood cells resulting in inflammation and the formation of pimples (papules and pustules). The inflammation of the hair (oil gland) follicle can spread to the surrounding tissue forming large painful lumps (nodules or cysts). This inflammatory response recurs, damages cells that produce collagen and over time results in pitted scarring. Hormonal fluctuations increase the production of pore oils or change its contents to make the oil more inflammatory. Many cosmetics, hair products, dirty bed linen, hats, helmets and sweating can lead to blocked pores. Medications can worsen acne. Squeezing pimples increases inflammation and acne may last longer and cause scarring. Washing your face too much or with the wrong products may make your acne worse. **Acne is a chronic condition** that cannot be cured but can be controlled.

U Cosmetic has many ways to treat acne. Blu U blue light kills the p. acnes bacterium. If your acne improves in the summer then blue light treatment will help control your acne all year round. Treatment involves sitting in front of the Blu U light source for **15-30 minutes**. There is a sensation of warmth that may feel like a sunburn but resolves quickly. A series of **8 to 12 or more treatments** are recommended **once or twice a week**. The blue light hand piece on the **Harmony XL** can be used in a similar manner. (See the PhotoRejuvenation Info sheet). With either technology, additional treatments are required to maintain remission every **1 to 3 months**.

Every person is unique and although good results are expected, it is impossible to guarantee. Initially, any acne treatment may actually **worsen acne** before it starts to improve.

Another option for acne therapy is PDT. Photodynamic Therapy uses the blue light to activate a chemical called aminolevulinic acid (Levulan™). Using Levulan™ increases the treatment time but may decrease the number of treatments to control acne to 3 to 5 treatments. Chemical peels periodically mixed in with any acne regimen can provide the highest amount of exfoliation to keep pores open and rejuvenate skin. Medical-grade skin care products should be used to manage acne in between treatments. Accutane and certain antibiotics are medications that are very effective in managing acne. There may be other options for treatment including not doing any treatment.

Side effects of blue light therapy include facial **hair loss**. This is usually temporary, however it may be long lasting. Light-based therapy can trigger cold sores. Uncommon side effects are **pigmentation changes** or **bruising**. Rare and unexpected risks include **burns** and **scarring**. Many of these side effects worsen with sun exposure. Eye damage is avoided by wearing the provided safety goggles. There may be side effects that are not known at this time.

Blu U or Harmony XL AFT blue light treatments are **not recommended** if you are pregnant or breastfeeding, have a light sensitive disorder such as porphyria or light-triggered seizures. Certain medications such as thiazides (for high blood pressure), certain antibiotics (such as tetracyclines, fluoroquinolones, griseofulvin or sulphonamides), sulfonyleureas (used to treat diabetes), phenothiazines (used to treat certain emotional or sleep problems), Accutane, Gold therapy, St John's Wort and Ginkgo Biloba may increase your risk of side effects.

All of our treatments are enhanced by a proper skincare regimen, good quality SPF product and by maintaining a healthy lifestyle. U Cosmetic has chosen a range of specific medical-grade skincare products that complement all of our procedures, can prolong results of many treatments and keep acne under control. U Cosmetic **can** control your acne!

Prior to the procedure you should:

- avoid sun exposure/tanning beds/tanning products for **3 to 6 weeks**.
- start prophylactic anti-viral therapy if you have a history of cold sores.
- be off Accutane and Gold therapy for 6 months and St John's Wort and Ginkgo Biloba for **4 weeks** prior to treatment. These medications may cause photosensitivity.
- avoid skin irritants (Retin-A, glycolics, etc.) for **4-7 days** before and after treatment.
- notify at your appointment if you have an upcoming important event.

Day of procedure you may/will /should:

- feel like you have a sunburn after the treatment and this will usually subside soon after treatment with the Blu U and within a few hours with the Harmony XL. Helpful treatment may include ice packs/cool compresses or **Pro-Derm Hydrogel**.
- appear very red or pink. This is expected and can last less up to a day.
- apply Fucidin H if blisters form. **Do not pick disturb blisters**, this can cause scarring.
- use at least SPF 30 sunscreen on the area treated.

After treatment you should/may:

- notice mild swelling. This will subside in **2 to 4 days**. Ice packs will decrease swelling.
- avoid stronger skin products containing alphas hydroxy acids, retinol *etc.* until redness and irritation are no longer present (approximately **3 days**).
- wash your face twice a day, after exercising, sweating or wearing hats or helmets. Avoid wearing hair product close to your face. Pillowcases should be changed weekly.
- Contact the clinic at anytime if you have questions. We are here to help you and want your experience to be a pleasant one.

You will start to enjoy your new complexion within 2 to 3 weeks of your treatment and possibly sooner with suggested skincare products!

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