

## Fine Lines and Wrinkles

Facial lines and wrinkles are visible due to muscle action or skin folding. A combination of thinning skin, decreased collagen, decreased elasticity, and repetitive muscle action over time can accentuate these lines and wrinkles. Some areas have deeper lines and wrinkles, typically seen in these locations:

- Between the eyebrows appearing as “number 11s”
- Forehead
- Eyelid skin and “Crow’s feet”
- Bridge of the nose or “bunny lines”
- Lips, “smoker’s lines”
- Cheek lines
- Mouth lines or “marionette lines”

## What Can Treat These Wrinkles

Wrinkles and lines may be smoothed by selectively targeting these various types of wrinkles:

- Fine permanent wrinkles
- Dynamic wrinkles, seen with movement
- Deep permanent creases

Skin quality and thickness generally affect the appearance of fine lines. If your skin is naturally thin, you may be predisposed to the early appearance of fine wrinkles. This is less visible when skin is thicker.

A combination of a daily skin treatment and laser therapy can help reduce the appearance of fine lines by thickening the skin, boosting the amount of collagen and water. A custom plan can be prepared for you by the cosmetic skin experts at the Ottawa Institute of Plastic Surgery.

## CO2 Laser Treatment of Fine Lines

The CO2 lasers can be used to help skin appear tighter and smoother. The effects from laser treatment are:

- Collagen production
- Increased hydration
- Skin irregularity resurfacing

Traditional CO2 lasers had a longer recovery period. The latest CO2 lasers can be customized to deliver the

treatment as a fractional dose, reducing the overall downtime. The depth of resurfacing can also be customized to a lighter, medium, or deeper peel. This will tailor the treatment to the unique features of your skin.

## Who Can Have CO2 Laser Skin Treatment?

Laser treatment with CO2 works best to address:

- Skin tightening and rejuvenation on the face, neck, body, labia
- Reduction of lip (“smoker’s lines”) and eyelid wrinkles (“crow’s feet”)
- Scar treatment (acne, trauma, surgery)
- Removal of layer of sun damaged skin

Your skin must be free of active inflammatory lesions, recent tans, or infections. The treatment may change depending on your medical skin conditions. If you tend to develop thick scars or keloids with any injury, you may not be a good candidate for CO2 laser treatment.

## What to Expect

You will receive instructions to prepare for this which may include creams or prescriptions medication.

The laser procedure takes place in a private clinic procedure room and lasts approximately 30–45 minutes. The skin will be treated with local anesthesia injection to numb the sensation from the laser. Eye protection will be placed by the clinic staff. When the treatment is finished, an ointment will be used to keep the skin moist. You will receive a skin care package and instructions for after care.

There is slight soreness felt after the procedure but you are able to move and walk right away.

## Recovery

Recovery time is generally 5–7 days for CO2 laser treatment. There may be some redness or crusting at the treatment site which generally heals within the week and can be covered with makeup or a mineral foundation. You will want to relax indoors. It is important to protect the skin from direct sunlight during this time as the reaction to the UV light may cause pigment irregularity.

## How Many Treatments Are Needed

For best effects, 2-4 treatments may be needed, spaced 4-6 weeks apart.

## What About Dynamic and Deeper Wrinkles?

Facial muscle injections best address the wrinkles brought by motion. This is done by selective neuromodulator injection to areas of higher motion. When the muscle motion has decreased, the skin attached to the muscle relaxes, decreasing the visible creases.

Deeper wrinkles may require a combination of injections and laser resurfacing to address the wrinkling from deep below (muscle action) and the surface (texture).