

BRIDES

What is a VI Peel? The Benefits and Side Effects You Should Know About

By [Katie James Watkinson](#) | Updated on 08/09/21

You've cleansed, toned, moisturized, and sun-screened routinely for six months straight. You may have even invested in facials, tried an at-home microcurrent device, or derma-rolled through gritted teeth (please, collagen, appear overnight). And yet, somehow, your skin just doesn't glow from the inside out as you've always dreamed it would when you said, "I do." Time to give up? Not so fast, we sought out [Melissa Doft, M.D.](#), a board-certified plastic surgeon and clinical assistant professor of surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College to get the low down on the VI Peel, a light chemical peel that removes the damaged outer layers of skin for a smoother texture and game-changing glow.

MEET THE EXPERT

Melissa Doft, M.D. is a board-certified plastic surgeon, the owner of Doft Plastic Surgery in New York, and a clinical assistant professor of surgery at Weill Cornell Medical College. She was named one of the top physicians of 2019 by New York Magazine.

What is a VI Peel?

In short, a VI peel is a chemical peel that helps to reduce signs of aging and improve skin's overall tone and texture. The quick and painless treatment combines many of the best peeling ingredients (Phenol and TCA) with anti-aging ones (retinol A, vitamin C), minus any irritating hydroxy acids.

Benefits of the VI Peel

VI peels are perfect for those looking for a painless pre-wedding treatment that will yield immediate results.

"The VI peel helps to improve the tone, texture, and clarity of skin while reducing age spots, sun damage, and hyperpigmentation," she says. "It also softens fine lines and acne scars while stimulating collagen production for firmer, more youthful skin," explains Doft.

The peel can be done once as a great pinch-hit for brides seeking that extra boost just before the wedding. But to maximize the effects, Dr. Doft recommends a series of three peels, scheduled one month apart, ending 30 days before the wedding. "I often have patients return to the office seven to 10 days later for a medical facial that includes an enzymatic peel and dermaplaning," she adds. "This removes any excess skin and is an hour and a half of pure indulgence for a very busy bride-to-be!"

Side Effects of the VI Peel

The VI Peel is suitable for all skin types and requires little downtime, but each patient responds differently. You may experience quite a bit of itchiness on night one (have a Benadryl handy and a Claritin or other nondrowsy antihistamine for the following day, just in case). It's best to schedule your peel for the end of day Thursday, so you can go to work on Friday with only minor dryness and then hibernate over the weekend since the majority of peeling takes place on days two and three. The peeling isn't totally gross, but it's not exactly cute (and you're not allowed to pick at the skin, it has to fall off naturally), so if you're uncomfortable appearing in public, limit your plans. By Monday morning you should wake up fresh and ready to re-enter the world.

What to Expect During the VI Peel

Truth be told, chemical peels sound much scarier than they actually are. Your technician will cleanse your skin and wipe the chemical solution all over your face. It's a fast treatment that will last about 30 minutes from start to finish.

Following the office visit, you're sent home with a handy kit that includes specific instructions for the next 72 hours. You're allowed to remove the solution using a post-peel towelette four hours after the initial application; one hour before bed, another towelette and gentle face washing with the VI cleanser. You're also given a hydrocortisone cream to relieve any itching or discomfort, plus an SPF 50 sunscreen to wear over the course of the week to protect the new layer of skin.

After just one peel, you should expect to see an improvement in your skin's appearance. Dark spots and fine lines diminish immediately upon completion of the treatment, and months later you will still be able to see the effects of the peel.

Cost

Price varies depending upon the practice, but Dr. Doft charges \$400 for the peel and \$250 for the facial.

The Verdict

After considering the benefits and potential side effects of a VI peel, it's clear that the peel is an excellent treatment to add to your pre-wedding beauty regimen. Just make sure to take into account the peeling aftermath of the treatment and plan accordingly. The VI peel is sure to give you flawless skin for your wedding day ... and months after.

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