



ARNICA & VITAMIN K FOR BRUISE MANAGEMENT

A CLINICAL GUIDE

WHY BRUISE MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Visible bruising directly affects patient satisfaction and perceived recovery time, particularly after facial and aesthetic procedures. Post-procedure ecchymosis is associated with lower patient satisfaction, while visible bruising after surgical procedures, laser treatments, or injectables can delay return to social and professional activities.



Dr. Maryam Safaee is a board-certified dermatologist based in Los Angeles with an extensive background in both medical and cosmetic dermatology. In addition to her dermatology training, she has extensive internal medicine training, which lends itself to her unique system-level approach to skin care.

PRIMARY TREATMENT OPTIONS

ARNICA MONTANA

Mechanism: Helps reduce the appearance of bruising and swelling by supporting the body's natural response to localized trauma.



Clinical Evidence:

- Topical arnica has demonstrated improvement in post-procedural bruising and ecchymosis in randomized controlled studies of laser-induced bruising and cosmetic recovery.¹

Recommended Protocol:

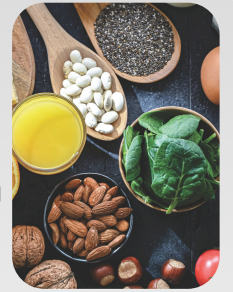
Timing: Begin immediately post-procedure

Frequency: Apply 2–3 times daily

Duration: 5–7 days or until bruising resolves

VITAMIN K

Mechanism: Supports the reduction of visible bruising by aiding the clearance of extravasated blood and improving the appearance of discoloration.



Clinical Evidence:

- Topical vitamin K has been evaluated for reducing bruising after laser procedures.²
- Topical vitamin K oxide gel has demonstrated improvement in postprocedural purpura.³

Recommended Protocol:

Timing: Begin immediately after procedure

Frequency: Twice daily

Duration: 7–10 days or until bruising resolves

Critical Point: Pre-treatment vitamin K does NOT prevent bruising — only post-procedure application is effective.

Clinical Pearl: Use both agents together for complementary mechanisms: arnica to support the anti-inflammatory response, vitamin K to aid clearance of extravasated blood.

PROCEDURE-SPECIFIC PROTOCOLS

LASER TREATMENTS

(PDL, IPL, ABLATIVE)

1. Apply arnica and vitamin K twice daily post-procedure
2. Continue 7–10 days or until purpura resolves
3. Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen daily
4. If significant bruising persists: consider PDL/IPL within 24–72 hours

INJECTABLE PROCEDURES

(FILLERS, NEUROTOXINS)

1. Apply arnica and vitamin K twice daily post-procedure
2. Continue 7–10 days or until purpura resolves
3. Ice for first 24–48 hours
4. Avoid strenuous activity for 24 hours

CUTANEOUS SURGERY

(BIOPSIES, EXCISIONS, MOHS)

1. Apply arnica gel around (not on) wound edges
2. Continue twice daily to surrounding ecchymotic areas
3. Gentle compression dressing if appropriate
4. Elevation when possible

PRACTICAL RECOVERY STRATEGIES

IMMEDIATE POST-PROCEDURE

(0–48 HRS)

1. Apply arnica and vitamin K twice daily
2. Ice 10-15 minutes per hour for the first 24-48 hours
3. Elevate above heart level when resting
4. Apply broad-spectrum sunscreen for exposed areas

BEFORE / AFTER



Day 1



Day 4

PATIENT COUNSELING POINTS

- Set realistic expectations: these agents accelerate healing but do not eliminate bruising
- Most bruising resolves in 7–14 days; these interventions reduce timeline and peak intensity

¹Leu, S., Havey, J., White, L. E., Martin, N., Yoo, S. S., & Rademaker, A. W. (2010). Accelerated resolution of laser-induced bruising with topical 20% arnica: A rater-blinded randomized controlled trial. *British Journal of Dermatology*, 163(3), 557–563.

²Shah, N. S., Lazarus, M. C., Bugdodel, R., & Bhanusali, D. G. (2002). The effects of topical vitamin K on bruising after laser treatment. *Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology*, 47(2), 241–244.

³Cohen, J. L., Bhatia, A. C., Dover, J. S., Geronemus, R. G., & Glaich, A. S. (2009). The role of topical vitamin K oxide gel in the resolution of postprocedural purpura. *Journal of Drugs in Dermatology*, 8(11), 1020–1024.

Bruise care supports the treated area in the first days after a procedure. For procedures that also leave a scar, see the *Scar Management Best Practice Guide* for silicone therapy as the area heals.