



les nouvelles
esthétiques

AMERICAN EDITION

LNE—the magazine for skin care and spa professionals

April 2003

\$7.50



dermatology update

by Dr. Debra Price

Questions and Answers

Ingrown hairs on black skin

Are there any new ingrown hair solutions for people with black skin?

Fortunately, the new long pulse lasers, such as the Lyra and Cool Glide lasers, can now safely and effectively reduce hair and razor bumps in individuals of all skin types. We have achieved excellent hair removal using the FDA approved Lyra laser without a change in skin color. Alternatively the use of Vaniqa cream could lessen hair growth and improve this condition, but would have to be continued indefinitely to maintain the benefit.

Avenge skin with Avage

Recently one of my facial clients told me she was using a cream called Avage. What is it?

Avage is 1 percent tazarotene and has recently been FDA approved for treatment of photo-damaged skin and hyperpigmentation. In comparison studies, it was found to be more effective than Retin-A. Patients should begin using Avage on alternate days until their skin acclimates to it. Estheticians should avoid waxing areas treated with Avage unless the medication has been discontinued for at least one week prior to waxing. Avage is a category "X" drug. This means that women of child-bearing age should not become pregnant while using this topical medication.

Rosacea

Are there any new rosacea treatments?

Yes, Azelex cream was recently approved for treatment of the inflammatory lesions of rosacea. Rosanil, a cleanser containing sodium sulfacetamide 10 percent and sulfur 5 percent, was also recently introduced.

AHAs and sun

Do alpha hydroxy acids make your skin more sensitive to the sun?

Products containing alpha hydroxy acids may increase your risk of sunburn or sun sensitivity and the FDA has recently recommended that a sunburn alert be placed on these products. Individuals using these products should use a sunscreen and limit sun exposure. There is no conclusive evidence that use of these products causes any other harmful effects but studies are presently being conducted.

The first time

At what point should a mother bring her son or daughter to the dermatologist for acne treatment?

It is advisable to seek treatment with a dermatologist early to prevent more significant disease. Individuals with the earliest comedonal acne should begin on a prescription retinoid such as Retin-A or Differin. The use of a salicylic acid cleanser is also advisable. Individuals with a strong family history of acne should initiate early prophylactic treatment with a retinoid or OTC retinol cream.

Avoid it

What should a person who is undergoing Accutane treatment avoid?

Waxing, chemical peels, microdermabrasion and laser hair removal should be avoided. Any procedure that can create a skin burn should also be avoided for at least one year following Accutane therapy. Hypertrophic scarring has been reported in individuals who undergo these procedures during or in the first year following Accutane therapy. Individuals already participating in a regular exercise program can continue exercising during Accutane therapy, but beginning a new or more intensive program during therapy is not advisable. Keratolytics, glycolic and salicylic acid cleansers, abrasive cleansers and scrubs should not be used. One should not take vitamins or other supplements without consulting a physician. It is also advisable to avoid deep tissue massage. ■

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