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Conquer 10 Esthetic Woes

No. 1—Wrinkles

Q: Considering all of the modalities available, in your opinion, what is the quickest and most effective way to reduce wrinkles in the dermatology office?

A: There is no single office treatment that is the most effective for improving wrinkles. The ideal modality depends on the location, quality and extent of wrinkling and the patient's tolerance for downtime. In most cases, a combination of therapies is a client's best bet.

The light emitting diode treatment is a new, noninvasive technology to treat aging skin. LED therapy promotes collagen formation and inhibits the breakdown of collagen through a process known as photomodulation. Patients note a more youthful appearance, a decrease in pores and redness, and an overall improved skin texture. There is no pain or post-treatment downtime.

For volume loss and wrinkles in the lower face, filler substances are the most effective remedy. Newer hyaluronic acid fillers such as Restylane, Captique, Hylaform and Hylaform Plus are more effective for deeper lines. Cosmoderm, a human collagen filler, works best for fine

lines. Intermediate lasting fillers such as Sculptra are only approved for lipoatrophy treatment in patients infected with HIV. Their safety and efficacy in individuals with an intact immune system is being evaluated.

Botox remains the gold standard for the relaxation of dynamic frown, forehead and crow's-feet wrinkles.

Does your client need a serious treatment to even skin tone? The Medlite laser is said to be the most-effective laser for brown spots.

Early neck wrinkles also respond well to Botox. Dermabrasion or ablative laser therapy are the ideal treatments for improving signs of advanced facial wrinkling and photodam-

aged skin, but these treatments involve significant downtime, the risk of scarring and pigment changes, and result in redness that can last for, at most, six months.

Fractional resurfacing is the newest anti-aging laser therapy. Treatments produce microscopic wounds in the skin and there is no significant downtime. However, unlike traditional laser resurfacing, a series of sessions is required for maximal improvement.

No. 2—Aging skin

Q: What are the best topical therapies for aging skin?

A: For individuals with aged skin who desire an overall improve-



ment in skin texture, pores, color and fine lines, look for topical agents that stimulate collagen production such as Retin-A and Tazorac, along with cosmeceutical agents such as idebenone; growth factors; peptide-containing products; copper-containing creams; and vitamin C can be helpful. Of course, the daily use of a broad-spectrum sunscreen is important to prevent further sun damage and sun-induced skin aging.

No. 3—Crow's-feet

Q: Aside from using Botox, what can you do about crow's-feet?

A: Botox is the most effective treatment for crow's-feet. However, Gentlewaves therapy (LED photomodulation), nonablative and ablative lasers, chemical peels and filler substances are also effective. Often, a combination of therapies is the most efficacious.

No. 4—Hair removal

Q: What's the best method for permanently removing hair?

A: Laser hair removal is the most effective way to permanently remove hair. While the response can *continues*

be variable, most patients will experience a diminution of hair growth and a decrease in the thickness of remaining hair in areas undergoing multiple sessions of laser therapy.

No. 5—Popular prescriptions

Q: What type of medications do you prescribe the most to patients and why?

A: Retin-A and Tazorac are the medications I prescribe most. Both medications remain the most effective prescription remedies for aged skin. The latter therapy has been shown to work better for improving hyperpigmentation and wrinkles, but not everyone can tolerate it.

No. 6—OTC 'must-haves'

Q: What's the one over-the-counter medicine that should be in everyone's medicine cabinet at home and why?

A: Sunscreen is the most important over-the-counter anti-aging remedy. Daily use of a broad-spectrum sunscreen will lessen the long-term risk of skin cancer and photo-aging of the skin.

No. 7—Bag the sag

Q: Without plastic surgery procedures, do you know how to remedy sagging skin?

A: Over the past few years many new, nonsurgical, skin-tightening methods have emerged. To date, none of

them has been shown to compare favorably to plastic surgery for advanced skin laxity. For early laxity, Thermage, a radiofrequency device, can cause some skin tightening, but it is not uniformly successful in all patients. Syneron, a combination of laser and radiofrequency energy causes some tightening, but the results are subtle. Titan, another skin-tightening laser that uses an infrared light source, has recently been introduced. Results from this new laser are still being evaluated. Fractional resurfacing with the Fraxel laser and ablative resurfacing can also tighten skin.

No. 8—Younger-looking skin

Q: Will topical vitamins or antioxidant ingredients really make skin look younger?

A: Several cosmeceutical antioxidant ingredients have been shown to protect and improve the appearance of aged skin. These include vitamin C, grapeseed extract, idebenone, green tea and lycopene. However, because stability and effectiveness may vary depending on formulation, one should choose products that have undergone studies that demonstrate stability and activity.

No. 9—Even skin out

Q: Without using makeup or camouflage techniques, how can you make a client's skin color and texture look and feel more even?

A: The best technology to improve the color and texture of the skin are LED photomodulation (Gentlewaves) and laser therapy. Gentlewaves promotes an overall, improved skin appearance. The V-beam laser effectively improves redness. The Medlite laser is the most effective laser for the brown spots.

No. 10—Botox alternatives?

Q: Do you know of any topical therapies that happen to be as effective as Botox?

A: Argireline or acetyl hexapeptide-3 is a synthetic peptide that is touted as a topical alternative to Botox. It is found in several cosmeceutical products including Avotox, DDF's Wrinkle Relax and Natura Bisse's Inhibit. None of these topical agents have undergone objective clinical studies to assess their claims of efficacy. ■

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