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March 2024
Volume 20, Number 2
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Jennifer Levine, M.D.





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Photoaging Philosophy: Protect + Repair

I've mentioned previously my passion for sun protection and products that will convince even the most stubborn patients to use sun protection throughout their day. With my pale skin, I've always had plenty of motivation to wear sunscreen no matter the weather or venue, but I admit that I am one of those pickier patients in this regard. While protection is key, skin care is seeking to tackle photoaging from all angles in 2024, aiming to not only protect skin against sun damage but repair it at the same time. Sun protection skin care is being elevated to new heights, with new formulations and synergistic product pairings utilizing mineral actives that not only protect against UVA/UVB rays as well as HEV (blue light), but antioxidants and ingredients like bakuchiol to protect skin against the damaging effects of free radicals and repair signs of photoaging. Here are some exciting sun protection and repair products to supercharge your patients' fight against photoaging.



Clinical Resolution Lab's Post-Care Kit is a powerful combination for photoaging protection and repair. The **Liposomal Hyaluronic Peptide Serum** provides advanced nourishment to protect and hydrate the skin while offering soothing antioxidants, including MAP (Magnesium Ascorbyl Phosphate), a potent antioxidant used for UV protection and repair, collagen production, skin lightening and brightening and as an anti-inflammatory - to balance redness, irritation and sensitivity. The **Sun Protective Cream** is a sunscreen formulated with an advanced silicone elastomer to repair damaged DNA and provide anti-aging benefits. The **StemPep Moisturizer** combines patented stem cell technology and innovative active ingredients for powerful anti-aging, wound healing and skin brightening benefits. Iron oxide works with titanium dioxide and zinc oxide to boost SPF and shield skin against visible light rays, and Myristoyl Hexapeptide-5 repairs sun-damaged DNA cells while helping produce collagen and elastin. **skincarecrl.com**



EltaMD UV AOX Elements Broad-Spectrum SPF 50 is a facial sunscreen with antioxidants to help combat and restore signs of premature aging. It is formulated with 13.5% zinc oxide and 4.4% titanium dioxide, 100% mineral actives that reflect and scatter UVA and UVB rays, and iron oxide, which creates blendable tint that helps blur imperfections and block 56% of HEV (blue light). Vitamin C & E help neutralize free radical damage to combat and restore signs of photoaging, such as fine lines and wrinkles, hyaluronic acid increases hydration and moisture retention and bisabolol and ginger root calm skin and visibly reduce redness. This powerful formulation is proven to reduce detrimental effects of multi-environmental aggressors (i.e., UV, Ozone and PM) by 96%, making it one of my go-to products. **eltamd.com**



TiZO's Advanced Vitamin C + E Serum and Mineral Sun Defense make for a powerful sun damage duo. The **Advanced Vitamin C + E Serum** helps firm skin and visibly reduce the signs of premature aging such as fine lines, wrinkles and uneven skin tone. The triple antioxidant formula (vitamin C/18% THD ascorbate, vitamin E and ferulic acid) works synergistically to reduce the damaging effects of reactive oxygen species and limit signs of UV damage by neutralizing free radicals, while bakuchiol helps diminish signs of aging such as fine lines, wrinkles, skin laxity and overall photodamage. **TiZO Mineral Sun Defense** is a gentle, tinted mineral sunscreen designed to help shield the skin every day from the damaging effects of the sun. Titanium and zinc oxides reflect away UVA and UVB rays, while antioxidants help defend the skin against free radicals. Together, this duo provides one powerful punch to fight back against photoaging. **tizoskin.com**

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Reversing Sun Damage & Signs of Aging Caused by UV Exposure with Laser Therapy

In the ever-evolving world of dermatology, the battle against skin aging and sun damage remains a paramount concern. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation accelerates the aging process, leaving its mark on our skin in the form of wrinkles, fine lines, skin discoloration, hyperpigmentation (dark spots), and a loss of skin elasticity. The Skin Cancer Foundation reports that over 90% of visible changes attributed to skin aging are due to sun exposure, making effective treatment options necessary in modern dermatological practice.[1]

Enter Reverse® by Aerolase, a groundbreaking approach to laser therapy that has revolutionized skin rejuvenation. Reverse by Aerolase specifically targets and reverses the effects of sun damage and aging, cementing its place in the crowded field of laser therapies. The state-of-the-art protocol offers dermatologists and medical professionals the capabilities and potential to deliver better results for their patients regardless of their skin type.

Understanding UV Exposure and Its Effects on Skin

- UV radiation affects are extensive and accelerate skin aging, also known as photoaging
- UV directly impacts the skin's cellular structure including collagen production
- Results in visible signs of aging such as wrinkles, fine lines and uneven skin tone



Sun Damage and Fine Lines
Photos courtesy of James Gordon, MD

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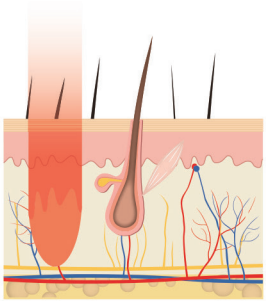
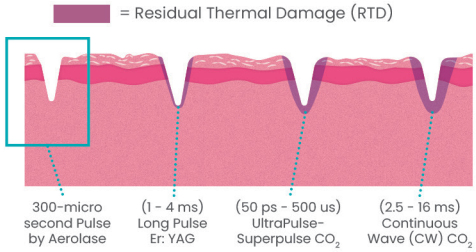


- Full-field, high fluence 1064nm delivered in a 650-microsecond pulse duration that deeply penetrates into the dermis
- Collagen stimulation for tissue tightening and brightening that breaks down red or brown discoloration
- Gentle enough to allow for ablation treatment next.

Step 2: era elite® by aerolase®



- Full-field 2940nm energy delivery in a 300-microsecond pulse duration
- Unique energy avoids collateral thermal damage by gently ablating the skin's epidermal layer
- New, smooth, youthful tissue grows to replace ablated skin and the dermis and epidermis is replenished and strengthened

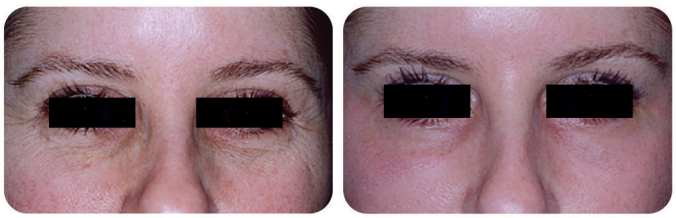
This combination addresses the specific effects of UV exposure, making it practical for a wide range of skin types and tones. A clinical trial involving patients with signs of sun damage reported a noticeable reduction in fine lines, wrinkles, and pigmentation after treatment with Reverse[3]. Furthermore, these devices are recognized for its high safety profile, making it suitable for sensitive skin types.

By harnessing the power of laser technology, Reverse effectively winds back the clock on signs of aging and sun damage, providing patients with rejuvenated, healthier-looking skin. As research and technology evolve, devices like Reverse by Aerolase will play a pivotal role in aesthetic dermatology.

1. Skin Cancer Foundation. "The Skin Cancer Foundation's Guide to Sun Protection."
2. Journal of Dermatological Science. "Laser Treatment in Photoaged Skin."
3. Clinical Trial on Reverse® by Aerolase. "Efficacy of Reverse® in Treating Photoaging."



Tone and texture
Photos courtesy of Chesahna Kindred, MD



Wrinkles and Crow's Feet
Photos courtesy of James Gordon, MD

Photo Courtesy of Dr. Hiram Elizondo

Scan to find out more or set up a demo

LATEST IN LITERATURE

Study Confirms Essential Connection Between Gut Health and Skin Conditions



An observational study conducted by the Hairline International Hair & Skin Research & Treatment Center based in Bengaluru has established a connection between gut health and skin conditions. The two-year observational study from July 2021 to June 2023 explored how poor gut health can cause common skin conditions such as acne, atopic dermatitis, eczema and psoriasis.

A total of 2,235 patients were part of the study, 62% women and 38% male, each undergoing an H pylori test to assess their gut health. More than 70% of children and pregnant women from various age groups suffered from atopic dermatitis or eczema. The research team administered Atogla probiotics to the participants in the study in addition to conventional medicines. In contrast, the control group received only medication and no probiotics. Notably, the study uncovered that pregnant women supplemented with probiotics during pregnancy and while breastfeeding reduced the risk of eczema in their children up to the age of 2. The majority of patients, 72%, were under 40, and the study found that 36% of female patients experienced other health issues, such as irregular menstruation, PCOS and hormonal imbalances.

Kala Vimal, M.D., consultant dermatologist and cosmetologist at Hairline International, remarked, "Among those with acne vulgaris, a staggering 72% displayed indications of poor gut health, marked by symptoms like food intolerance, allergies, GERD and digestive problems. This underscores the vital role of comprehending the human body as a holistic system."

FDA-Approval of First Fixed-Dose Triple-Combination IDP-126 Gel for Acne

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has just approved Ortho Dermalogics' IDP-126 gel formulated with clindamycin 1.2%/adapalene 0.15%/benzoyl peroxide 3.1% for the treatment of patients with acne. This makes IDP-126 gel the first FDA-approved fixed-dose triple-combination gel for patients with acne vulgaris, per reporting from *Dermatology Times*.



Earlier this year, Ortho Dermatologics announced its New Drug Application (NDA) filing had been accepted by the FDA. based on positive data from phase 2 and 3 randomized and double-blinded clinical trials that assessed the efficacy of IDP-126 gel in patients aged nine years and older with moderate-to-severe acne over 12 weeks.

In the phase 2 trial, more than half (52.5%) of patients treated with IDP-126 gel achieved treatment success as measured by a 2-point or greater reduction from baseline in the Evaluator's Global Severity Score and clearer skin. In the phase 3 trials, the IDP-126 gel consistently outperformed the vehicle gel in achieving clear or almost clear skin. Patients experienced reductions in both inflammatory and noninflammatory lesions when using the IDP-126 gel. Most treatment-emergent adverse events reported by patients were mild or moderate and IDP-126 was well-tolerated among participants.

From top: Image courtesy of eddows; New Afrca at Adobe Stock

Body Hair Transplantation Offers Promising Potential in Hair Restoration



A recent study in the *Dermatologic Surgery Journal* (December 2023) explored the potential of relocating beard and body hair to bald areas of the scalp through a body hair transplantation procedure. The study was conducted across the United States, Colombia, Mexico and India, analyzing 82 patients with an average age of 48.9 years old.

The UGraft Zeus, a novel skin-responsive device, was used to facilitate the body hair transplantation procedures and address complexities encountered by previous hair restoration techniques. The device distinguishes itself with proprietary design features, including a unique self-navigating capability adept at navigating diverse skin textures, thicknesses and varying levels of hair curliness during Follicular Unit Extraction. This capability minimizes graft damage and fosters improved wound healing, according to the study.

The study reports that graft attrition rates below 7% were consistently achieved in the body hair transplantation procedures, marking a significant advancement over prior technologies that reported damage rates as high as 20% (beard) and 30% (body). More than 79% of patients reported high satisfaction six months post-procedure. The study concluded that body hair transplantation has promising potential in hair restoration, offering remedies for severe baldness and rectifying issues from unsuccessful previous transplants. Researchers recommended that transplants like eyebrows, beards and eyelashes achieve more natural aesthetic results by utilizing matched body hair characteristics compared to thick but unmatched scalp hair.

The Negative Stereotypes Associated with Severe Acne

Severe acne can still create stigmatizing attitudes from society that can affect an individual's social and professional lives, according to a December 2023 study published in *JAMA Dermatology*. The study, authored by Ali Shields, BS, Michael R. Nock, BA; Sophia Ly, BA; et. al, surveyed 1357 adults to evaluate the prevalence and magnitude of stigmatizing attitudes towards individuals with acne.

Results indicate that the attitudes persist across a variety of social and professional scenarios, with some reporting feeling "significantly less comfortable with the idea of being friends or colleagues with someone with severe acne." Participants in the study also endorsed negative stereotypes about people with severe acne, perceiving them as having poor hygiene, being unattractive, unintelligent, unlikable, immature and untrustworthy. The stigmatizing attitudes were even more severe towards individuals with darker skin colors. The study indicates that these findings "highlight the need to identify approaches to reduce stigmatizing attitudes in the community and for adequate access to care, which might prevent negative downstream effects related to these stigmatizing attitudes."



From top: Image courtesy of Elnur; Christopher at Adobe Stock

Defeatist Attitude Towards Acne Treatments



A survey conducted by Sun Pharma of 1,003 survey respondents ages 13-55 revealed defeatist attitudes about acne treatments among people with mild-to-moderate acne. Only 30% of the respondents had seen a dermatologist for their acne issues and more than half of respondents felt that acne was not preventable and something they just have to deal with.

While 85% of respondents indicated knowledge of hormones as the underlying cause of acne, 69% cited sweat as a leading contributor and nearly one-third expressed the belief that eliminating junk food can make acne go away. Per the survey, 35% thought that squeezing or picking at pimples would help get rid of them, but it may actually worsen the condition and potentially cause permanent scarring.

While 40% reported receiving acne information from a dermatologist, one-fifth said they turn to social media for information, primarily TikTok and Instagram. Of the 77% of respondents who reported having a skin care routine, fewer than one in five characterized themselves as being very successful at mostly preventing acne breakouts and two-thirds said they were somewhat successful. Around 30% of respondents said that acne has caused them to avoid social engagement and 55% reported feeling self-conscious on video calls in meetings. Nearly half of respondents said they have hidden from cameras and 38% have added a filter to their digital photos to hide their acne.



Carboxytherapy Effectively Targets Cellulite and Periorbital Dark Circles

Carboxytherapy is a popular injectable treatment that is loved for its ability to treat a multitude of skin concerns. Its main uses include treating dark circles under the eyes and reducing cellulite and stretch marks, but it has also shown promise for use in scar treatments, different types of alopecia and infraorbital hyperpigmentation.

Carboxytherapy involves injecting small amounts of carbon dioxide gas underneath the skin to reduce cellulite and stretch marks and treat dark circles under the eyes, as well as wound healing, according to *Very Well Health*. Carbon dioxide brings additional oxygen into the area and dilates the blood vessels where it is injected to improve the overall appearance of the skin. An article in *Glam* explains that injecting CO_2 into the skin triggers the Bohr effect, a dynamic within cell tissues that allows the body to recognize when more oxygen is needed. When CO_2 levels rise, this signals the body to release more oxygen, stimulating the cells to release growth hormones and rejuvenating cells while simultaneously using up fatty acids to fuel this work. The CO_2 is processed through the body with other forms of waste, such as being expelled from our lungs.

Potential Applications: Carboxytherapy has been used to treat a variety of skin concerns in dermatology and aesthetic medicine. A March 2023 study in the *Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology* concluded that carboxytherapy has successfully been applied for skin aging, cellulite, localized fat deposits, striae distensae, infraorbital hyperpigmentation, scar, lymphedema, androgenetic alopecia, alopecia areata, psoriasis, morphea and vitiligo.

For fat and cellulite reduction, the procedure is often preferred over more invasive and high-risk methods, like liposuction, according to *Healthline*, which also claims that carboxytherapy is a relatively safe procedure with almost no side effects. Bruising may develop at the injection site, specifically in the arms and legs, but it should clear up within a week. People who get the procedure for fat reduction or cellulite also shouldn't immerse themselves in water for 24 hours, including swimming or using a bathtub.

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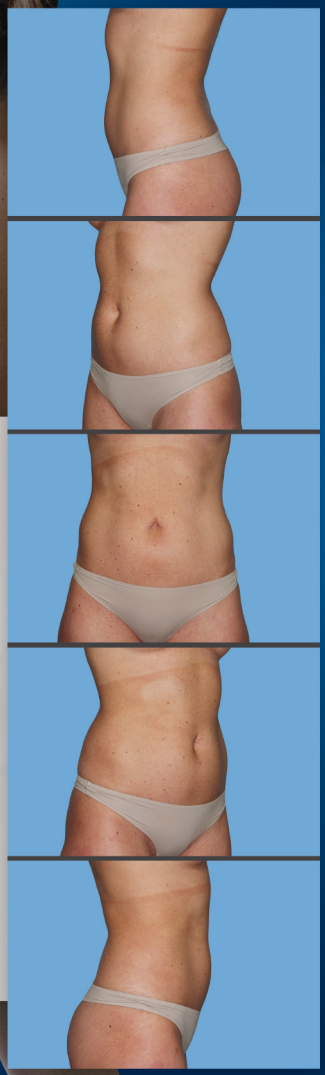

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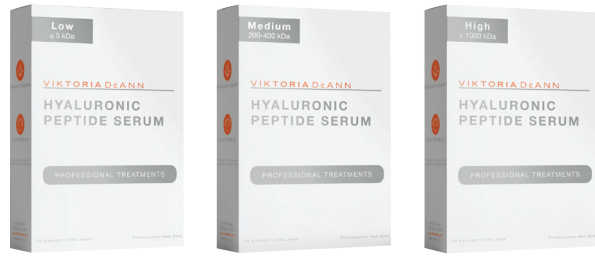









1 HYALURONIC PEPTIDE SERUM

Viktoria De'Ann Hyaluronic Peptide Serum is formulated with synergistic compounds like hyaluronic pro peptide, sodium polyglutamate and acetyl glucosamine to visually diminish redness after skin procedures.

Contact: 866.771.7546, viktoriadeann.com

2 LIP HYDRATOR

Circadia Lip Renewing Hydrator is packed with peptides and hyaluronic filling spheres to hydrate and enhance lip fullness and elasticity, leaving lips looking and feeling their best.

Contact: 800.630.4710, circadia.com

3 CRYO STAR

Pagani Cryo Star 6.0 static is exclusively distributed in the U.S. market by Skin Science Solutions and can multi-task using two different body wands while the client receives an automated session.

Contact: 800.674.8260, sunspawellness.com

4 DARK SPOT DIMINISHER

Gundry MD Polyphenol Dark Spot Diminisher is an advanced serum designed to help combat the visible consequences of sun exposure, such as sun spots, age spots and liver spots.

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5 RESTORATIVE LIP TREATMENT

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Industry Experts Discuss The Biggest Trends in Early 2024

We asked some of our favorite industry experts to identify some of the latest trends they see in medical aesthetics so far in 2024. Check out these new innovations in sun protection, body contouring and more.

"In the past few years, the skin care industry has witnessed an intriguing evolution in sun care. New products and innovations have blurred the lines between skin care and sun care, catering to both skin protection and complexion enhancement. Overall, we're seeing people simplifying their routines to a small, but more powerful, list of products. From tinted sunscreens, which improves defense against harmful UV rays while offering color correction, to serums infused with SPF that combine hydration and anti-aging benefits. We're also seeing this trend across skin care services; with consumers not only seeking holistic services, but ones that target and treat multiple issues at once. The latest trends in sun protection and across the skin care industry are simplified routines, multi-tasking products and treatments that fit easily into daily life."
—Arleen Lamba, M.D., founder of GLO30

"Trends come and go. It's critical to remember that plastic surgery is permanent. Hence, I never operate based on trends. I operate based on natural aesthetic ideals. History has shown that plastic surgery trends always fade and deviate back towards this natural aesthetic. Good plastic surgery should be indiscernible — where no one can tell you have had anything done. I'm glad to see a shift away from the most recent trends of the last five years (i.e. big lips, large butts, big breast implants, over-filled faces, etc.) I have found that in the last two years, more patients are requesting smaller breast implants and are reducing the amount of facial fillers they request."
— Daniel Y. Maman, M.D., FACS, plastic surgeon at Maman Plastic Surgery

"The future of aesthetics is regenerative medicine, and this includes new advances in skin care products. DefenAge's new body cream reprograms your dormant cells to create new skin cells from head to toe."
—Shino Bay Aguilera, M.D., dermatologist in Fort Lauderdale, Florida

"With the wealth of information on social media and the internet, consumers are learning at an earlier age what the sun does to our skin and the importance of sun protection. They're being educated through the content that they are consuming, and are realizing that sunscreen is non-negotiable no matter your age or skin type – in fact, it is one thing you can do to protect your skin from aging. SkinMedica's Essential Defense Mineral Shield Broad Spectrum SPF 35 Sunscreen is a great product on the market for sun care right now."
—Mona Gohara, M.D., dermatologist in Hamden, Connecticut

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BUSINESS CONSULT BY TERRI ROSS



How to Open a Successful Medical Spa

Expert advice on what you need to know to open a successful medspa.

Medical Spas are a $15 billion industry and are growing at an exponential rate. The industry is expected to reach $25.9 billion by 2026, with the average established medical spa generating $2 million annually.

So, it makes perfect sense why so many practitioners are wanting to expand into the medical spa arena or transition from the hospital setting or their current practice (dentists, family physicians, OBGYNs, etc.) to launch a medical spa— not to mention investment bankers and Private Equity Groups.

There are several factors driving the consumer market:

- Recession proof market
- Recurring revenue stream
- The demand for minimally invasive cosmetic procedures
- Advances in technology, making these procedures safer and more effective
- A population increasingly focused on wellness
- Our aging population looking for anti-aging and rejuvenation treatments

Image courtesy of elena at Adobe Stock

- The younger generation starting cosmetic procedures and treatments in their 20s or even earlier
- The male market growing at rapid rates
- The increased acceptance of non-invasive treatments as part of regular beauty maintenance

It's easy to get lured in and want to hop on the medspa bandwagon, but launching without a strategic plan in place is like building a house without a solid foundation. Doing things correctly from the start and investing in experts to help with the practical and tactical aspects will save you time and money as well as prevent you from making costly mistakes.

Questions to Ask Yourself if You are Thinking About Opening a MedSpa

If you're like most people considering starting a medical spa, you have a vision in your mind of what your business will look like. Vision and passion are necessary, but strategically planning to make that vision a reality is another story. You should be asking yourself:

- How can I do this?
- Is my concept and vision feasible?
- Who's going to develop my Pro Forma?
- What is the competitive landscape in my market?
- Do I need a business plan? How am I going to write a business plan?
- How much capital am I going to need?
- How am I going to get a bank loan?
- What are the startup costs required?
- What is the best location for my medical spa?
- How much space do I need?
- How do I negotiate a lease?
- How do I find the right architects/contractors/designers?



Image courtesy of Minerva Studio at Adobe Stock

- What services am I going to offer and what is the right mix?
- How am I going to price them?
- Are they going to be profitable?
- How do I go about finding the right team?
- How do I compensate my staff?
- How will I train them?

The Three Key Phases to Open a Medical Spa

Phase 1

The first phase of opening a medspa includes creating your practice's mission and vision statements. Next comes conducting a feasibility study and competitive analysis to determine your target demographics, ideal client and your unique value proposition.

A feasibility study helps to define how many people in your target demographic (say women between 25 and 65 with household incomes of over $100K) exist in your market. Then you want to perform a competitive analysis to determine how many competitors are vying for that same market. Determine how many competitors are there, what is their target demographic and what you can realistically expect your share of the "pie" to be.

Next comes researching to determine your startup costs and how much capital you are going to need to open your doors. Most entrepreneurs grossly underestimate their startup costs if they try to do it themselves due to so many factors that are typically unaccounted for.

Once you have calculated your startup costs, you must complete a Pro Forma. A Pro Forma is all the financial statements: assets and liabilities in the balance sheet, profit and loss statement, revenue cycles, expenditure cycles and tracks the money going in and out for your cash flow. The Pro Forma also considers marketing costs, labor costs and general and admin costs. After creating the Pro Forma, you can determine your EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization). This is important for securing a loan, and this is what private equity looks for when considering a purchase.

It is also vital in phase one to determine the right mix of services you plan to offer and build out your revenue per hour and profit per treatment based on assumptions in your Pro Forma. You want to ensure what you are offering yields the most profit. This may not look like what you had in your initial vision.

Then you must create a budget and forecast for the first year. A forecast is revenue minus expenses, but it does not take debt into account. For example, if you have a loan payment of $5,000 per month, that is not going to show up on your Profit & Loss statement.

Finally, you need to develop a comprehensive business plan. This is very important if you are trying to secure a loan. We strongly encourage you not to buy a generic template online but to work with experts in the aesthetic space to develop your business plan.

Phase 2

Phase two involves procuring your loan, selecting your site and designing/building out your space. You'll need to hire a commercial broker and negotiate a lease or purchase. You'll need to hire architects, come up with a building timeline and hire a general contractor for construction oversight as well as designers, decorators, etc.

Doing all this on your own, again, can be super overwhelming without expert guidance with years of experience starting up hundreds of successful medical spas. Practice management consultants make sure all this covered, and can help you save money from very costly mistakes.

Phase 3

The third phase is all about implementation, which means everything you must do until you open your doors. The implementation phase starts about 90 days before you open and there should be milestones starting at 90-, 60- and 30-days pre-opening.

There are a multitude of tasks to do during this phase including:

- Securing legal, accounting and insurance services
- Creating an SEO-optimized website for lead generation, social media channels and a marketing plan





Implement digital marketing and practice management tools.

- Pre-launch planning and execution
- Selecting your software for accounting, patient communication, practice management and EMR (electronic medical records)
- Purchasing or leasing equipment to support your treatments/procedures you plan to offer and supplies you need as well as determining any retail lines you plan to sell
- Human resources tasks such as recruiting, hiring, onboarding and training your new team
- Setting up operational and clinical systems
- Inviting vendors to conduct training
- Finally, you want to plan your launch event.

This is just a broad overview, but as you can see, there is so much involved that this is not a case where you can rely on the old saying, "build it and they will come." ME



Terri Ross is a world-renowned practice management expert, thought leader, and international speaker in the medical aesthetic industry. She founded APX Platform in 2021. In 2023 after only two years post-launch, APX merged with Engage Technologies Group to offer a complete practice performance system, encompassing practice optimization and patient engagement. Terri now serves as President of Aesthetics at Engage Technologies Group.

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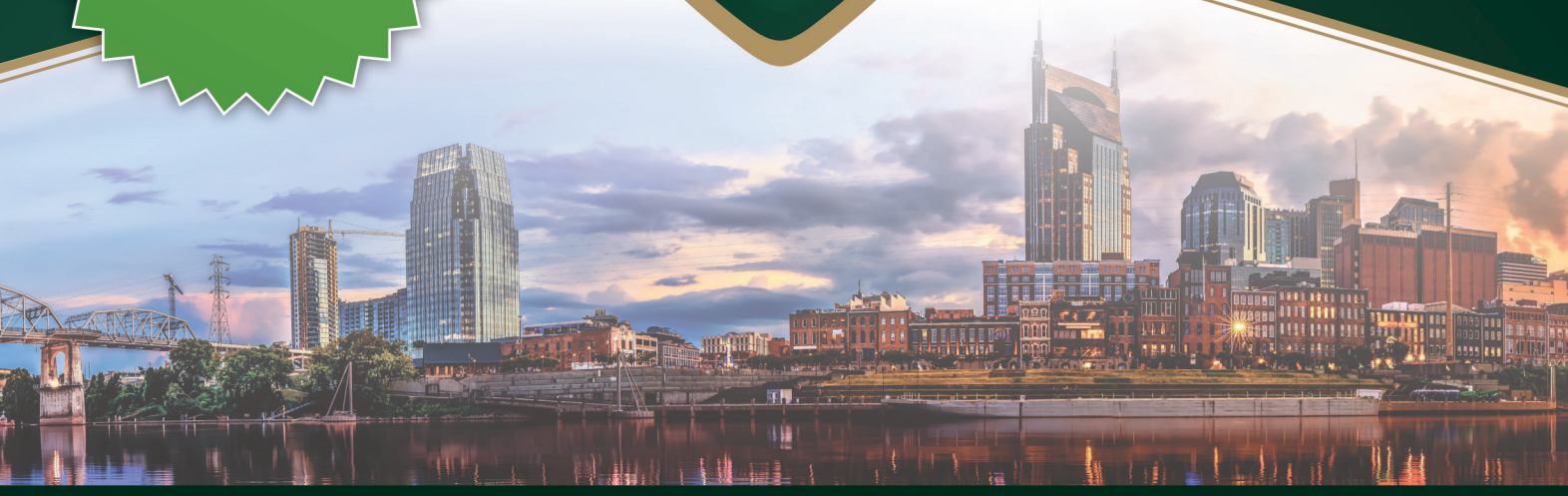

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Practicing Medicine in a "(F)lawed" World:

FEDERAL TAXES & FINANCE

A practitioner's guide to federal and state tax laws, deductions and tax planning strategies.



by Mona L. Hymel, J.D., CPA

Physicians in the United States earn high salaries, but they also pay higher taxes. However, many physicians are unaware about tax deductions that can benefit them. Tax deductions are excellent ways to reduce taxes and save money. In addition, doctors need to understand when they may have specific tax obligations, such as employment taxes. This paper will help you identify the tax deductions for physicians along with some tips and suggestions on how to maximize them.[1]



Federal Income Tax Deductions

Doctors need to report their income, including earnings from their medical practice, as part of their annual income tax return. They need to ensure accurate reporting of all sources of income, including salary, bonuses and any income from investments or side gigs.

Business Expenses: Doctors who are self-employed may be eligible to deduct certain business expenses related to their medical practice. Keeping detailed records of these expenses is crucial for accurate tax reporting. They need to identify potential tax deductions related to your profession, such as expenses for continuing education, professional memberships and necessary work-related expenses.[2]

Operating expenses: Self-employed doctors purchase office equipment, supplies, computers, office rent, utilities and building upkeep, among other things. Purchasing medical equipment and devices can often be more expensive than equipment used in other businesses, and thus, will provide prime tax benefits. Any relevant expenses connected with your practice can be deducted, offsetting taxable income. To ensure you can take all your eligible expenses, doctors must carefully document these costs.

Professional Dues: As a requirement for practicing medicine, doctors must pay certain professional dues and licensing fees. Such expenses include medical license renewal, membership fees, professional education costs, professional development and subscriptions to medical publications.

Health Care Premiums: If you are self-employed and you pay for your own health insurance, such amounts are deductible business expenses. Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) allow you to make tax-free contributions to cover your medical expenses. HSAs can be beneficial for both healthcare costs and tax planning.

Travel: Travel related to your medical practice, such as meetings, conferences and other events are generally deductible. Theses costs can include airfare, lodging and car rentals.

Mortgage Interest: Costs associated with your home may be deductible. For example, the interest you pay on your home mortgage and property taxes on your house are deductible.

Staff Costs: If you run your own practice, the costs associated with your employees are also deductible. You can deduct wages and salaries plus other costs related to their employment, such as employee benefits.

Charitable Contributions: Charitable donations are deductible. For contributions other than cash, the amount of the deduction can be as high as the fair value of donated property. Charitable contributions can offset a substantial part of your taxable income.

Retirement Contributions: Doctors may have various retirement savings options, such as 401(k) plans or Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs). Contributing to these accounts can have tax advantages.

Tax Credits: There are various tax credits available, such as the Child and Dependent Care Credit or the Earned Income Tax Credit, which doctors may be eligible for depending on their personal circumstances.

Self-Employment Tax: Many doctors are self-employed, which means they are responsible for paying both the employer and employee portions of Social Security (12.4% Social Security tax on up to $168,600 of your net earnings for the year 2024) and Medicare taxes (2.9% on entire net earnings). This is commonly known as self-employment tax.

State Income Tax Laws

In addition to federal taxes, doctors need to be aware of state income taxes. State tax laws vary, so it's important to understand the tax implications in the specific state where you practice medicine.

Nine states where physicians don't have to pay state income taxes:[3]

The average physician pays $12,952 a year in state taxes, but in nine states, physicians can avoid paying any

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state income taxes, according to data updated in 2023 from AARP. Here are the nine states with no income tax:

- Alaska
- Florida
- Nevada
- New Hampshire
- South Dakota
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Washington
- Wyoming

Tax Planning Strategies

Doctors may explore tax planning strategies to optimize their financial situation, such as income splitting, timing of deductions and other tax-efficient practices.

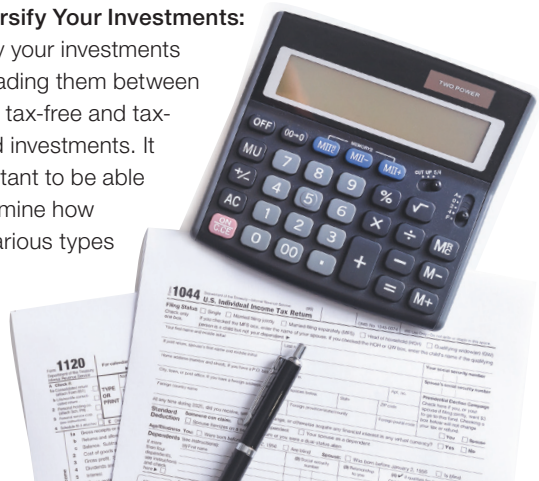
Business Structure: If a physician operates as a sole proprietor or has their own practice, they should consider the tax implications of their business structure, such as a sole proprietorship, partnership, LLC or corporation.

Employee Benefits: Understand the tax implications of employee benefits, such as health insurance, retirement plans and other perks that you provide to your employees. See the brief discussion above.

Warning – Refinancing Your Home: When buying or refinancing a home, only the interest expense on the first $750,000 of your mortgage is deductible. So, if you purchase a home and finance $1 million of the costs with a mortgage, you will only be able to deduct the interest expense paid on $750,000 of the loan amount. If you decide to borrow on the equity in your home (home equity loan) and you have not reached the $750,000 limit, then the interest paid is deductible, but only if you use the money to make home improvements.

Manage Your "Qualified Business Income": Qualified business income provides a special 20% deduction of qualified income for eligible taxpayers. The QBI deduction is quite complicated and would likely result in the need for a tax professional. However, if you qualify, the deduction can be very significant.

Diversify Your Investments: Diversify your investments by spreading them between taxable, tax-free and tax-deferred investments. It is important to be able to determine how these various types of investments provide a return on your investment. The taxability of any investment affects your rate of return. Allocating your investments across different accounts, industries and other categories will reduce your chances of serious financial loss.



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Conclusion

Physicians, like any professionals, must keep accurate records of income and expenses, stay informed about tax law changes and seek professional advice to ensure compliance and optimize their tax situation. If you need more specific information, you may want to consult with a tax advisor or accountant familiar with the healthcare industry. ME

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Before joining the faculty in 1995, **Professor Mona L. Hymel, J.D., CPA,** worked as a Certified Public Accountant and a Tax Attorney, earning her bachelor's degree in accounting and juris doctorate from the University of Texas. Her experience includes 8 years of both auditing and tax practice with Ernst & Young and several fortune 500 companies in federal tax planning. After law school, Professor Hymel worked for the law firm of King and Spalding in tax transactional work involving the most well-known U.S. companies. Since joining the law faculty, Professor Hymel has published several books on accounting and finance for lawyers. She also teaches Federal Income Taxation; LLP, LLC, and Partnership Taxation (pass-through entities); Accounting and Finance for Lawyers and Federal Tax Policy. Professor Hymel has also taught U.S. Corporate Taxation; Australian Corporate Law; U.S. Corporate Law; Estates and Trusts; and Ethics. Her research and writing primarily focuses on United States environmental taxation, specifically the use of subsidies to achieve environmental outcomes. Professor Hymel also writes and publishes in the areas of Accounting/Finance and Legal Ethics. Currently, she also serves as the Chair of the University of Arizona Faculty Senate (2022-2024).



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Jennifer Levine, M.D.

Social Media Savvy

Jennifer Levine, M.D.: Rewriting Female Beauty Standards & the Spread of Misinformation With Social Media.



Written by Rebecca Lane

Originally from Brooklyn, renowned facial plastic surgeon, Jennifer Levine, M.D., has had an impressive career in medical aesthetics spanning over two decades and one of the top practices on the upper east side of Manhattan, New York. However, her initial interest lay in the world of art before she decided to enter the field of medicine as an adult. She states, “I was primarily more interested in art growing up. When I was younger, I took a lot of art classes, specifically in portraits. I spent a lot of time on the bus or subway, so I would be sketching the person across from me and I would kind of fix the picture a little bit. Then as I went through school, I really loved math and science. I liked the precision and the learning of it. Then I found aesthetics was kind of the blend of art, math and science, merging all three together into one overarching field.”

After first earning her bachelor's degree with honors from Columbia University, followed by her doctorate from Cornell University Medical College, where she was elected to join the Alpha Omega Alpha National Medical Honor Society, Dr. Levine went on to do her general surgery residency at Lenox Hill Hospital and her residency in Otolaryngology at Manhattan Ear, Eye and Throat Hospital, which she completed at New York University as chief resident. She then trained with top surgeons in her field while serving as a fellow in Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at New York University Hospital.

Social Media Savvy

This impressive background has given Dr. Levine a deep understanding of facial anatomy and made her one of the top female New York City facial plastic surgeons. With her philosophy of enhancing an individual's face as a whole while maintaining an appreciation for each patient's unique facial features, she does not believe in changing a patient's face to fit into a particular aesthetic trend or standard while discarding their uniquely beautiful individual features. Dr. Levine stands out as a professional and expert industry presence on social media, working to counteract the spread of harmful disinformation, educating patients on what information is correct and what is not when it comes to viral social media beauty trends and DIY treatments. Her social media efforts have garnered much attention, making her a leading authority in the field of aesthetics in particular on how to utilize social media as a medical professional to counter the rising spread of misinformation. She now speaks to the need for more representation from female aesthetic practitioners to change the beauty standards currently dictated by mostly male practitioners, and help dictate more women-centric beauty standards.

The Dissemination of Information on Social Media

It's not surprising with all of the viral beauty trends and misinformation about DIY and professional aesthetic treatments and skin care that learning how to navigate social media is a hot topic at the moment.

Dr. Levine understands just how significant an impact social media has on beauty standards, with it serving as one of the primary influences in changing aesthetic standards.



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One example she gives is the change in the preferred ratio for lips, which has a major impact on patients' interest in injectable filler treatments to enhance lips. While the preferred lip ratio was previously 1:1.6, social media has had a direct impact on changing the overall preferred lip ratio to 1:1.

This consistent exposure to specific aesthetic standards on social media results in a perception drift in patients, skewing their understanding of what is actually normal when it comes to individual beauty as opposed to the images they see on social media. It is important to note that these posts causing a perception drift are not from physicians but rather celebrities and social media influencers without any formal education in medical aesthetics.

Dr. Levine reveals that one of the biggest culprits behind this perception drift is the monumental surge in the use of photo filters, which affect certain aesthetic standards such as the change in preferred lip ratio to 1:1, a result of automatic enhancements made by photo filters. Physicians now have the vital responsibility to address the impact of social media aesthetic standards with patients, educating them on what is aesthetically normal for their individual characteristics and manage patient expectations for achieving individual aesthetic goals.

She explains, "That is the problem with the dissemination of information. Without education you're not able to know what's right or what's not right, so I think that all we can do is try to continue to educate people so they're able to make informed decisions about what's right and what's wrong because we can't prevent the dissemination of information. All we can do is try to give people a framework of what to do with that information, which is tricky, but that's what we need to do. We need to continue to highlight qualified people giving correct opinions. People can't always distinguish that."

On the bright side, the very tool being used incorrectly to negatively impact aesthetic standards and the spread of detrimental disinformation about various cosmetic treatments for beauty enhancement as well as skin conditions can be used by qualified medical aesthetics professionals to correct the harmful information being spread by celebrities and social media influencers.

4 Tips for Aesthetics Practitioners Navigating Social Media

1. Stay Current On Social Media Trends

Dr. Levine emphasizes the need for aesthetic practitioners to know exactly how people are using social media, who makes up the demographics of social media users depending on the platform, what kind of content they are attracted to and the influence qualified professionals utilizing social media have on individuals looking to these social platforms for information on aesthetic trends and treatments.

"Without education you're not able to know what's right or what's not right, so I think that all we can do is try to continue to educate people so they're able to make informed decisions…we need to continue to highlight qualified people giving correct opinions."

According to Dr. Levine, 80% of Gen Z and 75% of Millennials surveyed are actively looking to social media for content on cosmetic procedures. When it comes to the demographics of social platform preferences, Dr. Levine points to a study in the *Aesthetic Surgery Journal* (February 2023) that found older generations (ages 36-70) are more likely to use Facebook and Instagram while younger patients (ages 17-35) tend to gravitate towards TikTok, Snapchat and Instagram.[2] Income also plays a factor, with patients in the $200,000+ income range more likely to use Instagram and patients with incomes of $200,000 or less gravitating towards Facebook. This leads us to Dr. Levine's first piece of advice for practitioners seeking to better navigate social media:

Make sure to stay up to date on social media trends. With so many individuals turning to social media for their information on the latest aesthetic trends, it is vital providers stay informed of those social media trends influencing patients. Dr. Levine shares, "I think that practitioners are not understanding how people are really using social media as search engines. They're getting their information from social media. It's not only a way for them to look at what

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their friends are doing or see what outfit is trending. They're getting information from social media, so they're better off getting information from qualified people. People of all ages are into social media, so it's not just young people. It's everybody. People used to think TikTok was only for teenagers, but it's not. Your grandmother can be on TikTok; anyone can be on these platforms."

2. Use Social Media to Educate Patients

One example she gives is a recent study published in the *Aesthetic Surgery Journal* (May 2023) that explores the patient perceptions and preferences of aesthetic providers on social media. The study found that 32% of patients that viewed posts by practitioners decided to receive treatment, with 57% of those surveyed being female and 43% male. According to Dr. Levine, 87% of patients prefer to see before and after photos of treatments and 67% want to see personal content from aesthetic providers.[1] With that, Dr. Levine goes into her second tip for providers when navigating social media:



Be authentic and stick to your strengths in social posts to educate patients.

Consistently use prevalent social media platforms to educate patients on what's right and wrong. From warning patients away from using viral DIY treatments such as vacuuming one's lips to plump them up to advising younger patients that slugging is not the best skin care trend to use on younger skin, putting your expert voice out there is the only way to counteract the spread of disinformation on social media.

Dr. Levine advises, "My main goal with social media is to educate, so I'm there to either explain something or let someone know some factual information. That isn't to say I won't do some more trendy videos sometimes, but the primary goal is to educate people and let them know what something really is, how it really works and why they should or should not do it." She adds, "I think you just have to continue doing that, and the people who are interested in education will find their way and people who are interested in these other whacky trends are going to be drawn to them. But, social media is really a conversation. It's a way for patients just to get to know you, so it's better to put something out that is about you or what you stand for so they then know you. It doesn't have to be perfect. Doing something is better than nothing. Do anything; do something. It's not about what or how often or what time. Just keep going."

3. Prioritize Mental Well-Being & Human Connection

Let patients see the real you through social media and inspire genuine human connection. This helps patients feel safe confiding in you prior to consultations. Ask open ended questions during initial patient consultations, and get to know more about your patient's motivations to make sure they are not solely driven by social media fads.

Dr. Levine explains the importance of sharing personal content on social media that allows patients to connect with who you are as a person, "I think it's that we're looking to connect with people through social media. We are looking for human connection, and that's why having something that's real or accurate or that especially represents who you are is so important. Sharing really is all about taking off a part of your armor and saying and showing people who you really are."

She continues, sharing why allowing yourself to be a bit vulnerable in your social media posts helps you provide better patient care, "If you really want people to connect to you or be able to confide in you, to share personal details about themselves in consultations, it's important for you to do the same. Otherwise, people don't know who you are; they don't know you as a person. That doesn't allow people to feel like they have a sense of who you are and what you're about before coming in, which requires a certain level of comfort. I think that makes people feel safer - and isn't that what we're about, making people feel safer? How can they feel safe if they don't know you? I think that it's very hard to share these personal things when we as practitioners don't normally do that, but it's not what connection is about. Connection is about actually allowing people to see who you are, and to put something out there on social media that isn't necessarily perfect or filtered because that's not real either."

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Another significant element of utilizing social media to educate patients and counteract harmful disinformation being spread and influencing today's aesthetic standards, particularly for women, is that it allows people to dictate society's beauty standards that don't necessarily represent the demographic seeking to adhere to these beauty standards. The question of who is dictating female beauty standards is an important one to consider. Dr. Levine states that while 92% of medical aesthetics patients are female, the industry is still made up of primarily male providers, male providers that are essentially contributing to the current beauty standards for women. More female providers not only entering the medical aesthetics industry, but utilizing social media to educate patients can help dictate more women-centric beauty standards.

4. Manage Patient Expectations

Use 3D imaging technology to do a full facial analysis, showing patients how they actually appear in contrast to their photo-filtered appearance, and how certain asymmetrical rather than symmetrical features enhance an individual's beauty.

Dr. Levine emphasizes the importance of maintaining a patient's unique identity and enhancing their natural features rather than seeking to perfect them. Helping patients see the beauty in their unique features rather than the perfect aesthetic look they may be seeking because of the influence of beauty standards dictated on social media is a major aspect of educating patients and counteracting the spread of disinformation and unrealistic aesthetic goals. She states, "Because I'm a surgeon, I'm always concerned about the deeper anatomy of the face, so utilizing treatments that will treat those deeper layers, not just the skin and the fat pads is important. Retaining the person's innate identity is also important. Whether that is their ethnicity, or they might have a feature that is a little more dominant, but really gives that person's face that interest and unique beauty, you don't want to necessarily take that away. You want to make the whole face look better, and that's not about making things look perfect. That's about enhancing the face overall, so facial balance is very important."

Be Authentic & Stick to Your Strengths

Dr. Levine leaves us with this last piece of advice for aesthetic providers seeking to navigate the changing trends of social media.

She states, "It's a very trite thing to say to be authentic, but for example, I was in this beautiful hotel room, and I took a picture of my breakfast and put it on my instagram story. Someone came up to me later and said, 'What a beautiful breakfast you had!' So, this shows how people want to see something that's real. Is it the most interesting breakfast in the world, maybe not, but it shows what I was doing. I think that people are better able to relate to you if you're able to make yourself slightly vulnerable. I think social media is not about being perfect. I think that people shouldn't be afraid to put something out there. Just do it instead of worrying about if it isn't something you love or if you look your best."



Patients are using social media more as search engines to find information.

Dr. Levine advises sticking to your strengths when approaching your own content on social media and the daunting vulnerability in putting yourself out there for the world to see. She admits, "I can't really do a TikTok dance for example. I've tried and I'm not really good at dancing, I'm not going to get it right and it's not really who I am. I'm not doing TikTok dances on a regular basis. I think you have to just stay in your lane and play to your particular strengths when creating posts for social media." ME

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Rebecca Lane is the managing editor of *MedEsthetics*.

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BEYOND BEAUTY:

The Weight Loss Revolution

The aesthetic paradigm shift in the “Weight Loss Revolution” is shaping the future of the industry.

by Johnny Franco, M.D.

The GLP-1 medications such as semaglutide, Ozempic, Wegovy, tirzepatide, Mounjaro and Zepbound are likely to be the most impactful medications to become available in the United States in my career! The semaglutide and tirzepatide medications have been revolutionary in the battle against obesity. Initially developed as treatments for diabetes, these medications have shown profound effects on weight loss. Patients have experienced weight loss amounting to between 15% and 20% of their body weight within a year, leading to a global impact.



"The phenomenon of Ozempic face and body will continue to grow, as I anticipate skin laxity and the need for targeted volume replacement to be the number one patient concern over the next several years."

Benefits & Impact of Semaglutide Medications

Throughout 2023, speculation about who is taking these medications grew. Any significant weight loss was assumed to be linked to semaglutide, Ozempic, Mounjaro or tirzepatide. Several celebrities, including Oprah, publicly stated that they utilized semaglutide-type medications for their weight loss journey. The fact that many people have openly discussed using these medications to make lifestyle and health changes has been invaluable in normalizing the treatment of obesity. Medical practices, celebrities and public figures have embraced these medications with considerable success, transforming lives and improving healthcare overall in America.

Multiple studies have demonstrated the enhanced medical benefits of these medications beyond just weight loss. They have shown improvements in reducing coronary artery disease risk, as indicated by several studies in 2023. The semaglutide and tirzepatide medications have proven beneficial for weight loss and overall health, contributing to the reduction of heart disease risks.

In addition, there has been a noticeable shift within the healthcare landscape, particularly in how we view obesity. In the past, it was viewed as a lack of willpower or "laziness," and this has shifted to the realization that it is a chronic condition. This view of obesity being a chronic condition was supported by the FDA's approval of Zepbound (tirzepatide) for chronic weight management. This shows that the FDA sees obesity as an ongoing process, not an isolated event. The change in how we view obesity in the sense of medical management will open the doors for further treatment of patients struggling with weight issues.

The Weight Loss Revolution in Aesthetics

In the realm of aesthetics, these medications are poised to create a lasting ripple effect for years to come. The phenomenon of Ozempic face and body will continue to grow, as I anticipate skin laxity and the need for target volume replacement to be the number one patient concern over the next several years. In our current office, we currently see about 2,000 weight loss patients per month. We anticipate that this number will grow exponentially as these medications normalize and become more widely available. Many aesthetic and plastic surgery practices have already integrated these medications into their practices. However, whether or not a practice offers these medications, they are



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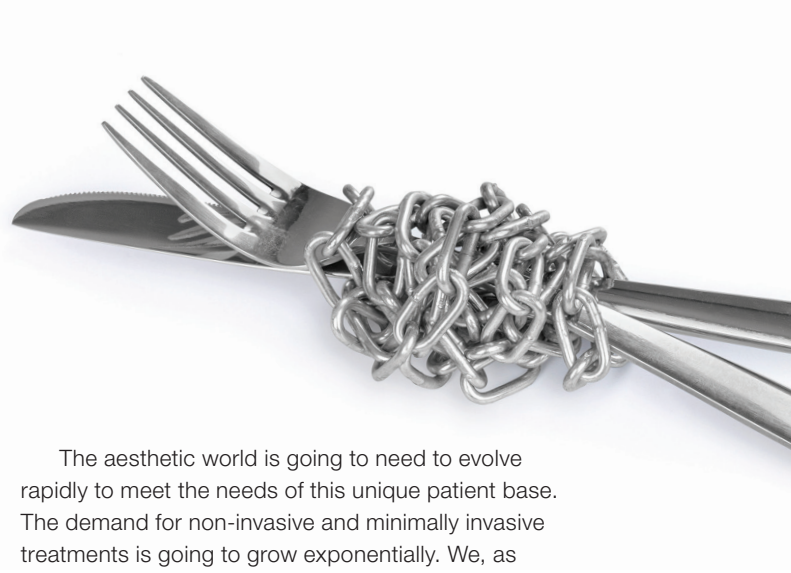
bound to become a cornerstone in the aesthetic world, resonating with patients and playing a meaningful role in their weight loss journeys, which will be a key element in aesthetics going forward.

Supporting Patients Throughout The Weight Loss Journey

As patients experience the visual effects of weight loss, It is crucial for aesthetic providers to be at the forefront, designing treatment methods that support patients throughout their weight loss journey, ensuring they look as good as they feel. This involves developing treatment protocols to address subsequent skin laxity, particularly as the majority of these patients are young and healthy, with mild to moderate laxity, making them ideal candidates for non-invasive skin treatments.



The aesthetic world is going to need to evolve rapidly to meet the needs of this unique patient base. The demand for non-invasive and minimally invasive treatments is going to grow exponentially. We, as aesthetic leaders, need to develop treatment plans that specifically treat the needs of this unique patient group. Practices that can help patients on their weight loss journey look as good as they feel will absolutely thrive in the world of the "Weight Loss Revolution."

"As patients experience the visual effects of weight loss, it is crucial for aesthetic providers to be at the forefront, designing treatment methods that support patients throughout their weight loss journey, ensuring they look as good as they feel."



Providers need to develop treatment plans to address subsequent skin laxity and meet the needs of this unique patient base during their weight loss journey.

This marks an exhilarating time in the aesthetic field and healthcare in general. The development of GLP-1 medications is one of the most significant medical breakthroughs in recent memory. It will be fascinating to witness how these medications evolve and benefit patients in the long term, setting the stage for a ripple effect that will likely shape the aesthetic landscape for decades to come! ME



Johnny Franco, M.D., is a board-certified plastic surgeon and owner of Austin Plastic Surgeon with an impressive history of publications, presentations and accolades, including the Merck Index Award and the Walter S. Haven Prize. He is an active member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, the American Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons and the Austin Society of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeons. He is currently Clinical Faculty at The University of Texas Dell Medical School. He also is a reviewer for the Aesthetic Journal and Annals of Plastic Surgery, where he reviews articles for publication from other plastic surgeons worldwide.

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Approaching Aesthetics Through the Lens of MENTAL HEALTH

Prioritize patients' mental health by paying attention to red flags and taking care to set proper expectations.

by Connie Brennan, APRN, AGNP-BC, PHN, CANS, CPSN, ISPAN-F

Our patients seeking aesthetic services have an increasingly sophisticated array of noninvasive, minimally invasive, device-based and surgical choices to help us achieve the results they are looking for. At the same time, as health care providers, it is crucial we maintain professional vigilance to ensure patients' safety and well-being, understanding the importance of considering their health holistically.

The concept of body image is multidimensional, encompassing thoughts, feelings and behaviors individuals have toward their overall appearance. These feelings are central to one's identity, whether that person is satisfied with or concerned about body image and appearance.[1] Much attention and research has focused on the concept of body image as a deficit, i.e. negative body image as a risk factor for poor mental health and psychopathology like eating disorders. A positive body image, on the other hand, contributes to better mental and emotional health.[2]



Key into words that are red flags, such as your patient "can't stand" or "hates" their appearance when they look in the mirror.

LISTENING FOR RED FLAGS

When patients come to us for advice on their aesthetic needs, we need to be aware of these issues and, through our consultations, ensure they have realistic goals and expectations. I begin by listening carefully, keying into words that are red flags regarding one's mental and emotional state. For example, if a patient says, "I look in the mirror all day long and I can't stand my appearance" or they use the word "hate," I become concerned. I might tell this patient that I do not have the skill set to get to the root cause of their feelings, and I offer to get them aligned with someone who can better address their needs.

Another red flag for me is when patients say things like, "I've been to seven other injectors and none of them do it as well as you can." If someone is building you up while tearing others down, this may be a clue that there are other issues going on for that patient. We should be wary of individuals who might have jumped from provider to provider unable to find one that meets their needs.

ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

It is my job to find out what a patient is seeking, not to point out what I believe are flaws. A patient might ask me, "What do you see and what do you want to do to me?" Instead, I want to hear from them, finding out together what we should focus on. I don't want to miss what the patient is feeling and jump to things that they never even thought about.

I try to understand what my patients like about themselves. I often ask them about their favorite features and develop a plan that enhances those areas. Maybe they love their smile, so that could be an excellent place to start with improvements that bring more attention to the beautiful parts of themselves.

HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

An important part of my holistic approach is finding out how my patients are feeling. Often my opening statement is, "Tell me what is going on in your life." I want to find out about their current state of mind and how they are feeling in general, not necessarily how they feel about the last treatment I gave them. If someone tells me they feel terrible, I want to know that and find out if I can help. Maybe they look tired because they are tired; I can help tease out what else might be going on.

Life can be fatiguing and stressful. Many times, I will discuss multivitamins, having blood drawn to check vitamin D levels or having them visit their family doctor. I love opening that door of, "tell me how you're feeling." I do want to know, and my patients understand that about me.

Many different kinds of life changes, from menopause to divorce, can put individuals into a place of struggle and they may be looking to aesthetic improvements for a boost. Whether it be neuromodulators to soften the face or widening and brightening the eyes for a more well

Image courtesy of See Less at Adobe Stock

rested appearance, those props are helpful tools for folks transitioning to a new stage of their lives.

HONEST ASSESSMENT

Take a female patient with heavy or droopy eyelids (ptosis) for example, who is concerned about age-related lines and wants a neuromodulator to stop wrinkling. Treating the patient with true ptosis could potentially cause the eyelids to droop more because of the relaxation that occurs in the muscle around the eyebrow and forehead area with neuromodulators. In this case, I need to be a detective and recognize that her lids are droopy to start, and if I do the treatment she demands, it could make her even more unhappy.

This requires an honest discussion of what it means to have lids that are a bit more lax, and explaining that, if I inject the forehead, I could be doing her a disservice. There are options for lifting the lids, from a topical pharmaceutical product to surgery. Ultimately, any given treatment should not worsen a different issue. I will discuss anatomy during the assessment to help patients understand their best options for achieving the outcomes they desire. This is a delicate conversation, which requires educating patients on what results I can achieve and setting realistic expectations versus what a patient might believe can be done.

EYE CONTACT

Our eyes are the first thing people notice about us, and when they look more open, brighter and wider, we look healthier and happier. Ptosis is caused by compromise to the levator and superior tarsal muscles that are responsible for upper eyelid resting position and elevation. A depressed eyelid position can reduce the amount of light entering the eye, thereby degrading visual acuity.[3] Drooping of the upper eyelid due to ptosis can have an important impact on individuals' well-being. A UK study found that adults referred for ptosis surgery reported higher than normal levels of appearance-related distress, anxiety and depression—similar to levels previously reported in patients with other appearance-altering ophthalmic conditions, such as strabismus.[3]



Oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution 0.1% is a prescription eyedrop that temporarily improves eyelid drooping by directly activating the alpha-adrenergic receptors in the superior tarsal muscle, stimulating contraction and elevation. In clinical trials of once-daily use, patients noticed an improvement in as little as 5 minutes, with full results in 2 hours and lasting for about 8 hours. My patients (and I am a user myself) have reported that in addition to the aesthetic improvement, they feel better when they are using the product. Some have even decided to forego surgery in favor of the drop and others have been so happy with the drop results that they pursued surgery for a more permanent solution.

MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Aesthetic procedures have the potential to improve patients' mental outlook. Injectables such as hyaluronic acid fillers and botulinum toxin type A were associated with significant improvements in patient-reported psychological and social functioning and reductions in appearance-related distress. What we do is valuable, improving psychosocial health in well-selected patients.[4] Patients having undergone cosmetic surgery in a 2-year multisite investigation reported high rates of satisfaction and improvements in body image within the first 3 months postoperatively, maintained through the first 2 months after surgery.[5]



"Oxymetazoline hydrochloride ophthalmic solution 0.1% is a prescription eyedrop that temporarily improves eyelid drooping by directly activating the alpha-adrenergic receptors."

From top: Images courtesy of LAONG; Shamil at Adobe Stock



Engage patients on a holistic level with an awareness of mental health, providing treatments that contribute to an overall positive self-image.

Several meta-analyses have confirmed the antidepressant effect of botulinum toxin injected into the glabellar region, with the safety and tolerability of the treatment found to be excellent in all studies.[6] The muscles in the glabellar region of the face play a key role in the facial expression of negative emotions, such as anger, fear or sadness, which are highly prevalent in mental disorders like depression. According to the facial feedback hypothesis, the facial expression of emotions generates proprioceptive feedback signals that can maintain and reinforce the expressed emotions. Relaxing glabellar muscles with neuromodulator injections may not only give the face a less negative and more positive expression, but may interrupt the feedback loop and lead to a less negative and more positive emotional state.[6] Along with cosmetic benefits, injections seem to enhance emotional wellbeing, improve social and psychological behavior and reduce irritability, as well as depressed and anxious moods.[6]

CONCLUSION

The standard of beauty varies from culture to culture and evolves over time, and it can become skewed through constant exposure to images—particularly on social media. It is our job as aesthetic medical providers to be aware of this as a societal phenomenon and engage each and every one of our patients on a holistic level in order to provide services that are in their best interest and contribute to an overall positive self-image. ME

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DETAILS BY KATHLEEN DWYER



Sun Protection Savoir Faire

Help your client choose their perfect sun protection.

For skin care professionals, one of the major conundrums of client education revolves around sun protection, especially daily sun protection. Your clients care deeply about their skin health and appearance; they invest substantial time and money in treatments and products to keep their skin looking its best. Most know that sun protection is important. Yet when it comes to protecting their skin (and their investment) from the photoaging effects of daily UV exposure, many find it hard to take that critical step. With 80-90% of photoaging due to UV exposure, sun protection is the foundation of anti-aging.

There are many reasons for this gap, and you've probably heard all of them. Some clients don't believe they personally need daily UV protection. Others attempt to get into the habit of daily sun protection, but are dissatisfied with products they've tried and abandon the effort. You don't want to lecture, but showing clients how the right sun protection can enhance their results and protect the investment they've made in their skin gives them the information they need to make a perfect sun protection choice. Correcting common misconceptions can help spark understanding of the personal benefit they will see from

Image courtesy of New Africa at Adobe Stock



building daily protection into their routine. Helping them find a sun protection product they love and that fits with their routine will make all the difference in their willingness to use SPF daily and ultimately keep their skin looking younger.

The Science of Photoaging

Many clients have misconceptions about UV and its role in skin damage that come across in the reasons they give for not using daily sun protection. Do any of these excuses sound familiar?

"I don't spend a lot of time outdoors."
"My skin tans easily; it doesn't burn."
"I use SPF in my makeup."
"I use clothing to cover up."
"I'm only in my 20's; my skin isn't aging yet."

Appreciating the role of daily protection in keeping healthy, younger-looking skin for years to come is easier when clients understand a little bit about the science of photoaging and the role of UVA and UVB rays. Many people understand that UVB rays are "burning" rays and UVA rays are "aging" rays, but they may not understand why that's the case.

"Photoaging" describes changes in the skin that happen after years of exposure to the sun's UV radiation. These changes include lines and wrinkles, laxity, dark spots, rough texture, breakdown of collagen and loss of elasticity. UVA is everywhere; it makes up 95% of the UV radiation that reaches the earth's surface. UVA rays penetrate deep into the skin, causing damage that can take years to become visible; but once visible, that photodamage can be difficult to reverse. Your client should understand that damage occurs even though they have no sunburn. Even a tan is actually a sign of damage.

UVB rays are shorter than UVA and tend to be the culprit in those painful sunburns. Both UVA and UVB rays play a role in dangerous skin cancers, so even if you never burn, broad spectrum protection is critical.

There are other differences that may surprise people. UVB rays are strongest in the summer months and during the middle of the day. That's why it's important to limit time in the sun during the midday hours. But UVA rays are with us all the time, 365 days a year. They penetrate glass, leading to extra photodamage on our "driver's side", and are the same strength from sunup to sundown all year long. There's no better reason for using sun protection every single day!

What's the Buzz About Mineral Sunscreens?

Often, we hear from clients that they know they "should" wear sun protection everyday, but aren't sure which one is best for them. Outlining their options and helping sort through them makes that decision easier.

Let's start with the sunscreen active ingredients. All sunscreens are not the same. There are two very different types of active sunscreen ingredients: MINERAL and CHEMICAL. There are just two MINERAL sunscreen ingredients: Titanium Dioxide and Zinc Oxide. These "physical blockers" act by reflecting and refracting the sun's UV rays away from the skin, are not absorbed through the skin and do not enter the bloodstream. They act as tiny shields on the skin's surface. Zinc oxide, in particular, is effective against a broader spectrum of UV light than any other sunscreen ingredient, so it can often be used alone.

> "UVA makes up 95% of UV radiation...UVA rays penetrate deep into the skin, causing damage that can take years to become visible; but once visible, that photodamage can be difficult to reverse."

Mineral sunscreens are very gentle and cause very few allergic reactions, making them ideal for sensitive and post-procedure skin. They don't burn the eyes and are kind to the environment; both titanium dioxide and zinc oxide are considered reef-friendly.

All other sunscreen ingredients are CHEMICAL filters. These ingredients absorb the sun's UV rays and, through a chemical reaction, dissipate them as heat. Unfortunately, studies have shown that these ingredients are also

MINERAL SUNSCREENS	CHEMICAL SUNSCREENS
• Reflect UVA-UVB rays • Lay on top of the skin • Very few allergic reactions • Rarely irritate eyes • Reef friendly	• Absorb UVA-UVB rays • Absorb through the skin • Most sunscreen allergies due to chemical filters • Irritating to eyes • Oxybenzone/Octinoxate damaging to reefs

Image courtesy ofdule964 at Adobe Stock

absorbed into the body and the bloodstream, leading the FDA to request additional safety data.

Chemical sunscreens make up a large part of the market because they tend to be easier and cheaper to use than their mineral counterparts. Historically, chemical sunscreen actives also had better aesthetics than minerals, so they are often used in makeups, moisturizers and spray or lotion formulations. But recent advances in mineral ingredient science have enabled sunscreen formulators to eliminate many of the trade-offs. High-quality mineral sunscreens are now available that feel silky rather than sticky, disappear beautifully, work well under makeup and leave no chalky residue. Plus, mineral sunscreens have no tell-tale odor, so they are perfect for daily use.



The Role of Antioxidants

Even the most dedicated daily sunscreen user will also benefit from antioxidant protection. Antioxidants provide a crucial safety net against constant exposure to UV radiation and other environmental stressors that create free radicals and ultimately lead to oxidative damage and photoaging. Free radicals are unstable oxygen molecules that have only one electron. The skin's natural supply of antioxidants is designed to knock out free radicals before they create damage, but that supply is depleted as it is used up defending against oxidative damage.



That's where topical antioxidants come in. These ingredients are like a second form of defense, helping to replenish the skin's vital supply. Pairing antioxidants like vitamin C and E with sunscreen ingredients, both as additional ingredients in a daily sunscreen and as a separate antioxidant recharge, provides an extra degree of defense against photoaging.

Finding Your Ideal Mineral Sunscreen

There's really no secret to helping your clients identify their perfect daily use SPF. Once they know the basics – minimum SPF 30, UVA/UVB and added antioxidants -- the best choice depends on their personal preferences and use. Here are a few tips:

Find a formula they LOVE. Mineral sunscreens come in many different textures and finishes. Some are silky, satiny and matte; others are moisturizing and dewy. A mineral sunscreen that looks and feels the way your client likes, that isn't sticky or chalky and that disappears beautifully on the skin is one they'll enjoy and want to make part of their daily routine.

Check the Active Ingredients. Turn the product around and look at the DRUG FACTS label. A pure mineral sunscreen will only have one or two active Ingredients: zinc oxide and/or titanium dioxide.

Consider the Use and the Form. Mineral sunscreens come in many forms. A cream or liquid that moisturizes or doubles as a makeup primer is ideal for daily use on the face. A stick is great for touch ups or on the backs of hands, while a lotion is a great choice for covering larger body areas. Avoid sprays that can be inhaled or get in your eyes. For clients that swim or are active, look for a water-resistant label.

Be willing to experiment. The hunt for your client's perfect sun protection may take a little trial and error with product samples, but the reward of protecting their skin with a product they enjoy as part of their daily routine is well worth the effort. ME



Kathleen Dwyer is Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Fallene, Ltd., the maker of TiZO. With a deep background in consumer marketing management supplemented by more than 15 years working with the professional skin care market and a love of science, Kathleen brings together business-building solutions for skin care professionals and the needs of their clients.

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Soak Up The Sun

Wearing sunscreen is skin care 101 for those in the know, but an unfortunate number of patients are still not buying into the SPF every day motto. We compiled some of our favorite sun care products that can potentially convert the deniers and save their skin.



Young Pharmaceuticals' **Couvrage and Couvrage Riche Broad Spectrum SPF 40 Sunscreens** contain zinc oxide in a silky tinted gel. Ideal for daily photoprotection, the broad-spectrum mineral sunscreen with an anti-oxidant complex is vegan and reef-safe and enhanced with 10% olive-derived squalane to give drier skin a dewy glow.
Contact: youngpharm.com



TiZO offers a collection of mineral sunscreens, but their latest offering, **Advanced Vitamin C + E Serum**, is rich in antioxidants to help defend the skin from free radical damage that can occur from environmental hazards. Ferulic acid and bakuchiol help firm skin and visibly reduce the signs of premature aging.
Contact: tizoskin.com



ColorLogix **Clear & Sheer Mineral Powder Sunscreen** applies to skin with no white residue and provides reflective protection against UVA/UVB rays. Naturally water-resistant and designed for warm, humid environments, the mineral based powder sunscreen is formulated with just five organic minerals. Available for Private Label Service.
Contact: inductiontherapies.com

Courtesy of the Manufacturers

NEW PETITION CALLS FOR STRONGER SAFETY WARNINGS ON BOTOX LABELS



A new petition is calling for the U.S. FDA to strengthen safety warnings for Botox and Botox Cosmetic labels and remove misleading promotional statements currently on the labels. The petition was filed on behalf of Public Citizen, a nonprofit consumer advocacy organization, and builds on a 2008 Public Citizen petition, which was granted by the FDA in 2009, asking the FDA to require the addition of the black-box warning on the labeling of Botox and related drugs regarding the risk of distant spread of the toxin. Public Citizen's petition requests that the black box warning of both cosmetic and therapeutic Botox and related drugs should, "make it clear that they are associated with systemic iatrogenic botulism and related symptoms, even when used at recommended doses, in initial or subsequent (repeated) treatment."



MENOPAUSE MAKEOVERS TREAT PHYSICAL CHANGES CAUSED BY HORMONAL SHIFTS

The medical aesthetics industry is experiencing a social destigmatization about the use of plastic surgery and the connection between self-esteem and healthy aging. More patients are feeling comfortable seeking cosmetic treatments to address both confidence issues and health issues beyond their control. The "Menopause Makeover" is one procedure gaining popularity in medical aesthetics. The treatment involves individual or combination procedures that address the physical changes in a woman's body caused by hormonal shifts that take place during menopause and can include liposuction, breast reductions, breast lifts, fat transfer, tummy tucks and more.

FDA TO REQUIRE CHANGES TO IPLEDGE PROGRAM FOR ISOTRETINOIN TREATMENTS

The FDA agreed to require the American Academy of Dermatology's (AAD) recommended changes to the iPLEDGE program for isotretinoin treatment safety that will, "reduce administrative burdens for dermatologists and help patients get access to treatments in an easier manner," according to AAD president Terrance A. Cronin, Jr., M.D., FAAD. The iPLEDGE REMS is a safety program to manage the risk of isotretinoin's teratogenicity and to minimize fetal exposure. The REMS is required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure the benefits of isotretinoin outweigh its risks. Some of the changes to the program include removing waiting period requirements for patients who do not obtain isotretinoin within the first seven-day prescription window and the allowance of pregnancy tests outside of a CLIA-certified laboratory.

GALDERMA & PATIENTFI ANNOUNCE A MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM FOR CUSTOM GALDERMA TREATMENT PLANS

PatientFi, creator of the aesthetics membership platform Privi, has announced a collaboration with Galderma to give patients access to a monthly membership to pay for custom treatment plans with Galderma's portfolio of innovative aesthetic products, all while earning patient loyalty points through Aspire Galderma Rewards. The collaboration addresses the unique market need to overcome costs and increase patient loyalty to practices. The two companies aim to disrupt the medical aesthetics market by making high-quality customizable treatments more accessible. Patients can receive recurring treatments with Galderma's world-class products with a more convenient way to pay.

DERMAPENWORLD REVEALS 'NOTHING ROUTINE' CREATIVE CAMPAIGN

DermapenWorld, headquartered in Australia, and Cutwater, a creative and media agency with offices in San Francisco and New York City, have collaborated on an all-new brand platform and global, integrated campaign called "Nothing Routine." The platform reinforces DermapenWorld's signature Synergy of Solutions, a holistic system that combines in-clinic treatments with at-home care. The effort will have a global presence and reach, starting with international heavyweights – the United Kingdom, Australia and Germany – and rolling out to additional markets. The assets will also be translated and localized to multiple languages. The content will be supported by a website refresh, influencer partnerships and email marketing initiatives.

From top: Image courtesy of ronstik; SHOTPRIME STUDIO at Adobe Stock

YOUNG PHARMACEUTICALS OPENS NEW CORPORATE CAMPUS

Young Pharmaceuticals, Inc. recently announced the opening of its new corporate campus in Wethersfield, Connecticut. The first building is complete and will serve as Young's new global headquarters. Designed by the Hartford-based architectural firm Russell and Dawson, the 20,000-sq.ft. structure is a unique blend of traditional and contemporary styles. Additional buildings are planned for the 31-acre park-like campus to accommodate Young's growing global business and provide incubator space for biomedical startups in which Young invests. Founded in 1977, Young is a leading developer and marketer of dermatological products sold exclusively to dermatologists and plastic surgeons for dispensing to patients.



THE POTENTIAL LONG-TERM INDUSTRY EFFECTS OF THE LIFE TIME FITNESS OZEMPIC PILOT PROGRAM

Life Time Fitness has introduced plans for a program to prescribe weight loss injections for members through in-house medical teams, including Ozempic, according to Life Time president and COO Jeff Zwiefel. The company would be the first gym to join the semaglutide trend that has been dominating the weight loss industry. The announcement has experts in the fitness industry concerned about the direction gyms may head in and the ethical nature of pharmaceutical drugs entering the fitness sector in an official capacity. According to Google Trends data cited by garagegymreviews.com, searches for Ozempic for weight loss purposes have outgrown searches for traditional weight loss methods and continue to grow while traditional weight loss terms decrease.

EVENTS

March 1-3, ASPS Spring Meeting, Virtual Event, Contact: registration@plasticsurgery.org, 847.228.9900, plasticsurgery.org

March 8-12, 2024 AAD Annual Meeting, San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, California, Contact: mrc@aad.org. 864.208.2374, aad.org

March 15-16, Aesthetics Conference & Exhibition, Business Design Centre, London, England, Contact: contact@aestheticsjournal.com, +44 20.3096.1228, aestheticsconference.com

March 21-24, Dallas Cosmetic Medicine & Rhinoplasty Meeting, Westin Galleria Dallas, Dallas, Texas, Contact: (Jane Fox) jfox@mdmeetingdesigns.com, 877.809.7525, dallasrhinoplastyandcosmeticmeeting.com



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The Ozempic Craze is Hitting the Gym Industry

As Ozempic continues to take over the weight loss industry, its use is potentially expanding into gyms with the announcement of Life Time Fitness' weight loss injections program.

Ozempic is close to being a household name, and any medical aesthetics professional with their ear to the ground has heard of the semaglutide for weight loss trend. With its increased off-label use for weight loss, it was inevitable that the drug would start flooding gyms around the world.

The catalyst for its injection into the U.S. fitness industry was when Life Time Fitness announced plans for a program to prescribe weight loss injections for members through in-house medical teams, according to Life Time president and COO Jeff Zwiefel[1]. The company would be the first gym to join the semaglutide trend that has been dominating the weight loss industry.

For those who need a reminder, GLP-1 drugs (such as Ozempic) are a common treatment for Type-2 diabetes, and some have also been approved for weight loss, while others are commonly used off-label for weight loss. Many GLP-1 medications use semaglutide, including Ozempic, Wegovy and Rybelsus, which works by helping the pancreas release the right amount of insulin when blood sugar levels are high.

The drug is attractive for weight loss purposes because it decreases appetite and increases satiety, leading to decreased caloric intake. It also causes decreased gastric emptying, leading to the sensation of being fuller longer after meals, which typically decreases caloric intake.

Life Time Fitness' new program has experts in the fitness industry concerned about the direction gyms may head in and the ethical nature of pharmaceutical drugs entering the fitness sector in an official capacity. However, the consumer interest is undeniable. According to Google Trends data cited in an article on garagegymreviews.com, searches for Ozempic for weight loss purposes have outgrown searches for traditional weight loss methods, and continue to grow while traditional weight loss search terms decrease.

Back in our April 2023 issue of *Medesthetics*, we tapped board-certified plastic surgeon and owner of Austin Plastic Surgeon, Johnny Franco, M.D., to tell our readers everything they need to know about the rising use of semaglutide for weight loss. This was before Ozempic skyrocketed in popularity.

According to Dr. Franco, "The weight loss revolution started when drugs such as Ozempic first hit the market to treat diabetic patients. It has been remarkably effective in decreasing HbA1C and complications associated with diabetes, however it was also found to facilitate weight decrease. Wegovy, the same semaglutide medication, was FDA-approved for weight loss in 2021. In 2022 Mounjaro, the newest of these diabetic/weight loss medications, was found to decrease patients' body weight by 15% a year."

Now, Ozempic has shown up on TV commercials, as background advertisements at sporting events and even received attention from national media news outlets. The drug is approaching mainstream status, which has led to supply shortages and alternatives flooding the market, along with plenty of Tik Tok trends along the way.

Its latest addition to the fitness industry establishes that the trend is only growing in popularity. Life Time Fitness assures that they won't easily issue the medication, and will carefully regulate Ozempic prescriptions through, "extensive blood panel analyses and FDA requirements of increased physical activity."

Experts question how the gym chain will exercise the medical responsibility and moral obligation of prescribing the medication properly. It was also suggested that incentives, commissions or kickbacks for getting gym members to use these services could present an additional moral dilemma that challenges the integrity of its personal trainers and gym staff. ME

REFERENCES:

1. "Life Time to Pilot Obesity Drugs for Gym Members," Fitt Insider, October 2023



Tony Scianna is the associate editor of *MedEsthetics.*

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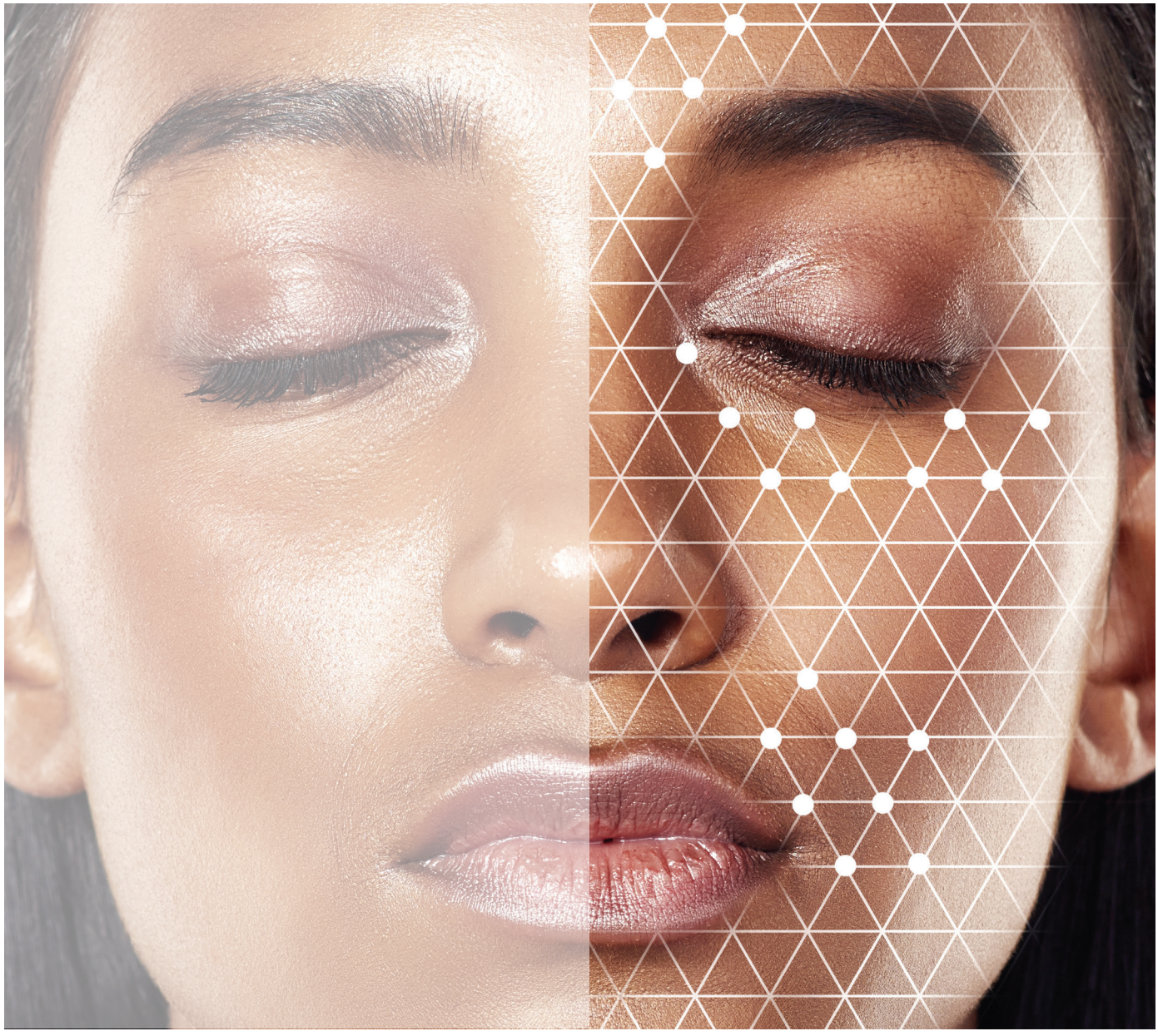

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