MedEsthetics®

THE GUIDE FOR EXCELLENCE IN MEDICAL AESTHETICS

Allured business media

July/August 2025
Volume 21, Number 5
medestheticsmag.com



A Tailored Approach to MEN'S ANATOMY in Plastic Surgery

PLUS:

- Preventive Aesthetics Boom Among Youth
- Men's Sexual Enhancment Treatments

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"Zemits Holistic Skin Rejuvenation Wellness Cold Technology offers a non-invasive way to calm inflammation, boost recovery, and restore a healthy, radiant look. Through controlled cold exposure, it stimulates circulation, supports lymphatic flow, and enhances collagen production — especially after peels, extractions, or exfoliation.

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OLHA MAIKINA
MD from Europe, Zemits Co-Founder

CLINICAL CASES: THE VISIBLE IMPACT OF HOLISTIC COLD SKIN RECOVERY

Radiance & Texture Renewal Wellness Treatment Protocol



Courtesy of Yulia Chaladze, Licensed Aesthetician,
Zemits Expert Provider Los Angeles, CA



Client: 78 y.o. female

Skin Concerns:
Aging, wrinkles, loss of elasticity, sagging, uneven texture

Treatment Frequency:
Once every 4 weeks

Number of treatments performed: 3 sessions

Results:
- Improved skin texture and tone
- Softer appearance of fine lines and wrinkles
- Reduced facial congestion
- Noticeably firmer skin

The treatment included 3 sessions combining manual extractions, ultrasonic cleansing, light microdermabrasion, and radiofrequency skin tightening. To complete each session, **ColdRestore™ Wellness Cold Technology** was used **to cool the skin, reduce puffiness, and enhance lifting results.** This cold phase also improved circulation and maximized product absorption. The treatment concluded with oxygen infusion and finishing care.

CryoTherapy Protocol for Redness Relief & Skin Recovery



Courtesy of Ashley Ford, Licensed Aesthetician,
Zemits Expert Provider Wilmington, NC



Client: Female

Skin Concerns:
Acne scarring, post-inflammatory erythema, congestion, dull complexion (jawline and chin focus)

Treatment Frequency:
One session performed; full series of 4–6 sessions recommended every 4–6 weeks

Number of treatments performed: 1 session

Results:
- Reduced redness and post-inflammatory reactivity
- Dewy, brighter, more even skin tone
- Visibly smoother texture and clearer pores

The treatment included 1 session combining deep cleansing, dermaplaning, microneedling, LED light therapy, and Wellness Cold Technology. Microneedling supported skin regeneration and collagen stimulation, while LED light helped reduce inflammation and target breakout-prone areas. The treatment was completed with **ColdRestore® Wellness Cold Technology, which visibly reduced erythema, calmed the skin, and boosted hydration.** This final step enhanced glow and reinforced post-procedure recovery.

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Exploring the Evolving Landscape of Preventive and Male Aesthetics



The July/August issue highlights the immense wave of preventive aesthetics and men's motivation for facial rejuvenation, but also how to approach men's procedures in plastic surgery.

While the July/August issue shines a spotlight on minimally invasive devices like lasers, injectables and PRP as preventive aesthetics rises for younger generations who are more interested in wellness and beauty than previous generations ever were, July/August has a particular focus on men in aesthetics. Not only has societal views of beauty and maintenance shifted to reserve a spot for their demographic in aesthetics, but weight loss continues to be an area of interest for all, even younger people, and with that invites potential side effects like volume loss and excess skin in undesirable places.

Cosmetic surgeries were once considered exclusive and not as advanced and accessible as solutions are now, but now, the goal of anti-aging and routine maintenance for a flawless end result for years to come has attracted so many individuals on different journeys with different ways of life, younger and older. One thing they all have in common, though, is the search for confidence and self-security.

In this issue, I highlight the immense wave of preventive aesthetics and men's motivation for facial rejuvenation, but also how to approach men's procedures in plastic surgery, as their anatomy differs widely from women. You will also find information on electrolysis for male-pattern growth, for those who do not identify as male, and also treatments that seem to be enhancing the intimate sides of mens' lives, among so much more!

Though June has come to an end, last month focused on men's health and mental health and it was also Pride month! This issue basks in that light as we welcome July and August.

I'm happy you're here,

Jamie O'Toole

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Global Beauty Private Label's Clinical-Grade Peptide Serum

Global Beauty Private Label Skincare, a company that manufactures and supplies unbranded cosmetic or skincare products for other businesses to sell under their own brand names, has created a Peptide C Concentrate–sychronizing medspa services and its at-home recovery support. The serum contains tetrahexyldecyl ascorbate, ferulic acid, glutathione and hyaluronic acid, designed to hydrate, fight oxidative stress and support collagen production as the skin barrier experiences vulnerable micro-injuries.



Skinceuticals' Advanced RGN-6

Developed in collaboration with 20 skin regeneration scientists, Skinceuticals created its Advanced RGN-6 after nearly five years of research. The regenerative topical was inspired by laser science, improving the skin's quality and susceptibility to irritation post-laser–advancing treatment results and supporting aging skin. After seeing positive feedback with the initial rollout in physician offices, the product was released to consumers on May 1. The RGN-6 cream features six active ingredients to minimize downtime and improve six key dimensions of visible skin damage: discoloration, redness, PIH, firmness, elasticity and smoothness.



Letybo K-Beauty Injectable

Letybo, a common injectable for glabellar lines in South Korea, was approved by the FDA in 2024 and is now finding its way in U.S. practices as a leading neurotoxin next to alternatives like Botox, Dysport and Xeomin. While Letybo is derived from the botulinum toxin A, like Botox, Dysport or Xeomin, the neurotoxin is approved along with the product's manufacturing process, so these second-generation toxins, like Letybo, have the benefits and advantages of newer manufacturing processes. Letybo is also a 900KD botulinum toxin A produced through an enzyme-free purification process using a protamine sulfate precipitation, double chromatography, designed to remove nucleic acids and enzymes of animal origin.

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It's 2025 & You No Longer Need A Marketing Agency To Grow Your Med Spa

In fact, agencies are becoming overpriced "middlemen" who deliver services you can now easily do yourself.

We know this because we've already helped *461+* med spas **fire** their agency and take their marketing in-house.

If you've had enough with agency merry-go-round, **scan the QR code below.** You'll get access to a 2025 case study video that explains our "anti-agency" med spa marketing system in full detail.

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✓ "Unicorn Offer " Custom GPT to build winning promos in seconds using AI.

✓ A list of plug-in-play ad campaigns to get new clients using social media ads.

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✓ Consultation presentation for iPad with a video walkthrough.

✓ Custom package builder spreadsheet tool. Use to build high-ticket packages during a consult.

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BUSINESS CONSULT BY SKYA JONES



Tracking What Matters: The Top 5 KPIs for Medspa Growth and Retention

For medspas, knowing the right KPIs to monitor and continuously maximize them is essential to your business's long-term success.

With medspas now at the forefront of the thriving global wellness economy, owners and operators are thinking less about proving their business model and establishing traction and more about sustaining and optimizing for the long haul.

The more the paradigm shifts in this direction, the more important it becomes to know your numbers and ensure they're moving in the right direction. For medspas, knowing the right KPIs to monitor and continuously maximize them is essential to your business's long-term success.

Before we go any further, let's be clear: one of the things that makes this industry so vibrant is that no two businesses are the same. The goal here isn't to tell you exactly what your numbers should look like—only you can determine that. Though we'll provide some general benchmarks and aspirational targets, they're not really the goal; the goal is simply to ensure that you're focused on the right metrics and taking steps to ensure you're moving them in the right direction.

Image by Lemonsoup14 at Adobe Stock

With that in mind, let's examine the five KPIs every medspa should track and leverage right now.

Average Revenue Per Appointment

Perhaps no single KPI provides a better indicator of the health of your business than average revenue per appointment. This is a big ticket industry, and for good reason: the past few years have proven beyond doubt that medspas provide high-value services for which clients are willing to pay top dollar. In fact, according to data from Boulevard, the average ticket revenue per appointment in the U.S. is roughly $530. Whether you fall above or below that benchmark is less important than doing everything you can to maximize the revenue you're bringing in with each appointment and aspiring to keep the needle moving constantly upward.

One great way to do this is through add-on services. Across the industry, top-performing businesses are adding additional services to roughly one-third of all their appointments, translating to 63% higher median ticket values. Among the many ways to boost add-ons, optimizing your online booking flow to promote additional services (nearly half of all add-ons are booked online) and setting attainable add-on incentives for your staff are among the best.



Perhaps no single KPI provides a better indicator of the health of your business than average revenue per appointment.

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Client Retention Rate

Getting new clients in the door is a good thing; getting them to come back for a second (and third and fourth and fifth) appointment is how you go from good to great. That makes client retention rate an essential KPI. In an industry where the relationships are deeply personal, you should be aiming for a retention rate in the neighborhood of 60-70%.

What are some things you can do to get there, aside from providing effective treatments and amazing service? Well (recurring theme alert), optimizing for online booking is, again, a great place to start. Data shows that clients who book their first appointment online are twice as likely to come back for second and third appointments as those who don't.

Automated text and email marketing is another great tool. Data shows that executing a simple campaign aimed at providing past clients with reminders to book is enough to generate a 5% increase in client retention rate, which is a big deal, since a 5% increase in retention rate generally translates to a 25% increase in revenue.

Another great way to drive up your retention rate is through membership programs. Data shows that across the self-care industry, members book three times as many appointments and have an 88% higher client retention rate than non-members. If you've yet to get your membership program in gear, look no further than your client retention rate to find the motivation you need to get going.

Staff Utilization Rate

This one is simple on the surface, but complex in practice. The simple part: the busier your staff, the better off your business. After all, time is your most precious resource, and you want as much of it as possible spent on activities that generate revenue for the business. The not-so-simple: optimizing your calendar in real-time to ensure ideal utilization of your staff's time.

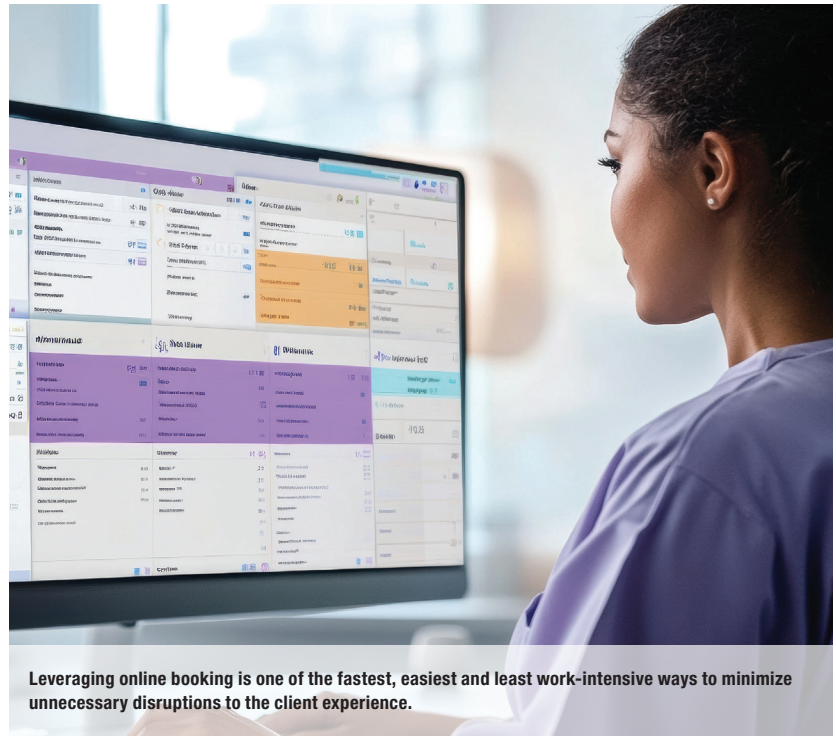
This is where modern advances in technology can help, as some booking platforms now leverage historical data to suggest the most utilization-efficient appointment times. Take advantage, if you're not already. Typically, I'll advise medspas to aim for a utilization rate that's no lower than 75% and ideally pushing up toward 90%. Anything lower is an indication that you need to drive more appointments or improve your scheduling efficiency (or, more likely, both).

Online Booking Rate

Unless you've skipped ahead, you're already well-versed in the myriad data-based benefits that come from online booking: more add-ons, more revenue per appointment and higher retention rates, to name a few. So, I'll use this section to extoll the experiential benefits of online booking.

Online booking is core to a great client experience. When there's a disruption to the client experience, it's rarely on account of the treatment itself. Rather, it's because it wasn't easy to book an appointment online, or because there was a delay during check-in or check-out, or because the client never got a reminder about their next appointment.

Leveraging online booking (ideally paired with integrated payments) is one of the fastest, easiest and least work-intensive ways to minimize unnecessary disruptions to the client experience. The more the merrier. While a 30-40% online booking rate probably puts you somewhere in the middle of the pack, you can and should think bigger. With today's technology and an incredibly online clientele, don't settle for anything less than 50%, and always be perpetually aiming higher.



Leveraging online booking is one of the fastest, easiest and least work-intensive ways to minimize unnecessary disruptions to the client experience.

Pre-Booking Rate

Another one that's simple in theory and challenging in practice: pre-booking. It is a powerful tool to drive business performance and a critical KPI every medspa should monitor and optimize. Put simply, an appointment booked weeks or months in advance is better than an appointment booked days or hours in advance—they're stickier, more reliable and more likely to pick up add-on services as the date draws closer.

But it takes work and commitment to drive your pre-booking rate up. Having a robust membership program is one great way to get going—members are far more likely to pre-book their appointments well in advance. Training your staff to encourage clients to book their next appointment as they're closing out their current one is another effective technique, as is leveraging automated text and marketing campaigns that remind and encourage them to get a jump on getting their next appointment on the books. If you're doing all these things well, pre-booking at least half of your appointments is a reasonable goal.

The Best Gauge is You

Now that I've just hit you with a whole bunch of industry data and aspirational targets, I want to close by reminding you that when it comes to tracking metrics and determining where you need to be and where you can improve, the operative word is you. Should you relentlessly monitor and track these five KPIs? Absolutely. Should you use industry benchmarks as a guidepost? Of course. Do I or anyone else know your business and your clients better than you? Absolutely not. Monitor regularly, optimize like crazy, but never forget who knows your business best. ME



Skya Jones is a Medspa Education Manager and in-house aesthetics expert for Boulevard. She works directly with the company's staff and medspa customers to help design memorable client experiences. Skya has more than seven years of experience in the beauty industry with a specific focus on medical aesthetics, as well as more than five years of experience in medspa leadership and management. Before joining Boulevard, Skya was a department lead for Bobbi Brown Medical Esthetics.

A certified nurse assistant, her career spans both clinical and business operations and includes stints as a manager at VitaNovu and a beauty advisor for Kohl's. Skya's go-to self-care routine is a relaxing facial or massage followed by meditation or yoga.

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The Regenerative Shift in Plastic Surgery: Why Skin Quality Can't Be an Afterthought

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The landscape of aesthetic medicine is continuing to evolve at an accelerated rate. While surgical procedures like facelifts, liposuction, and eyelid surgery remain cornerstones of practice, their growth has begun to plateau. Meanwhile, non-surgical, regenerative treatments are surging, and for good reason.

Today's patients—especially Millennials and Gen Z—want it all: youthful, healthy skin, natural results, and minimal downtime. They're more cautious about invasive surgery, fillers, or anything that risks an "overdone" look. Increasingly, they view skin quality as the foundation of aesthetic outcomes—not a secondary concern.

McKinsey's survey found that nearly 30% of Gen Zers and millennials in the United States report prioritizing wellness "a lot more" compared to one year ago, versus up to 23% of older generations[1]. The report concludes younger generations are taking a proactive approach to healthy aging rather than a reactive one.

While surgical intervention remains in demand, minimally invasive treatments now account for 80% of the procedures these generations seek for facial rejuvenation as they express less interest in invasive surgical procedures[2]. Common concerns for individuals who routinely use these mechanisms include acne scars, skin discoloration, as well as fine lines and wrinkles.

The Role of Laser Technology in Modern Aesthetic Care

Lasers have emerged as vital tools for bridging the gap between surgical precision and regenerative skin health. Devices like the Aerolase Neo Elite® and Era Elite® are equipping plastic surgeons with a powerful, science-backed solution to improve tone, texture, and collagen production before, after, or completely independent of surgery.

Laser-based skin treatments are quickly becoming the preferred approach for early-stage aging, post-surgical optimization, and as a revenue driver to fill the gap left by stagnating facelift and liposuction numbers.

Neo Elite®: Collagen-Stimulating, Skin-Tightening Without Trauma

The Neo Elite utilizes advanced 650-microsecond Nd:YAG technology to gently heat the dermis, stimulating collagen synthesis[3], improving skin tone and fullness, and reducing wrinkles without fillers, toxins, or invasive energy.

Plastic Surgery Benefits:

- Post-liposuction and body contouring skin laxity solution
- Noticeable lift without swelling, peeling, or pain
- Immediate firming with long-term regenerative results
- Excellent for neck, jawline, lower face, and delicate areas like the periocular region
- Proven improvements in collagen production and dermal elasticity

A recent clinical study of 110 post-operative surgical patients confirmed that low-intensity laser therapy with the Neo Elite accelerated wound healing, minimized scarring, and reduced hospital stays compared to conventional treatments.[4]

Era Elite®: Precision Resurfacing With Minimal Downtime

The Era Elite offers next-generation 300-microsecond Er:YAG resurfacing with CO_2-level precision—but with minimal downtime and exceptional safety across all Fitzpatrick skin types.

Hybrid Fractional Technology:

- Combines full-field ablation and thermal microchannels
- Dramatic improvements in skin texture, fine lines, and sun damage
- Post-surgical scar revision and pigmentation correction
- A surgical alternative for patients seeking natural rejuvenation without invasive procedures

Science-Backed Benefits for Plastic Surgeons

Post-Surgical Wound Healing (Neo Elite)

- Laser therapy accelerated healing, improved scar quality, and reduced hospital stays[4]

Persistent Edema After Rhinoplasty

- Non-invasive protocol using Neo Elite reduced swelling in 2-3 days, prevented fibrosis, and reduced revision surgery rates[5]

Breast Reduction Scar Improvement

- Patients experienced significant scar reduction, higher satisfaction, and no side effects after Neo Elite treatment[6]

POST-BLEPHAROPLASTY

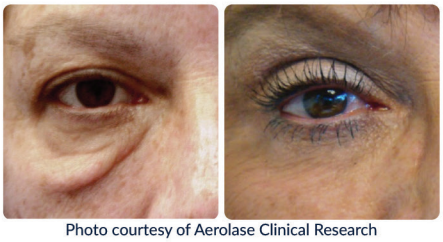

Photo courtesy of Aerolase Clinical Research

POST-SURGICAL BREAST SCARS

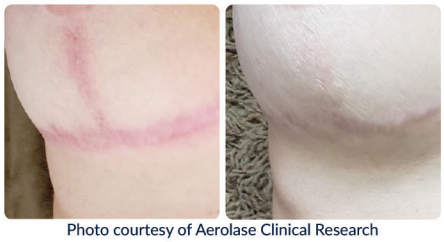

Photo courtesy of Aerolase Clinical Research

TRAUMATIC SCAR



Photo courtesy of Dr. William Watfa

Images courtesy of Aerolase

Meet Modern Demands. Expand Your Offerings.

For today's patient, aesthetics isn't just about volume and contouring, it's about skin health. As demand for regenerative, natural-looking results grows, Aerolase lasers give plastic surgeons a competitive edge:

- Address early-stage aging with non-surgical options
- Enhance surgical outcomes with collagen-stimulating technology
- Reduce downtime and risk for post-op patients
- Attract new patient segments—including men and younger generations
- Keep patients engaged longer with ongoing skin quality solutions

Effective & Long-Lasting Result

Naturally restores and preserves skin quality and strength through advanced collagen, dermis, and epidermis renewal.

Non-Invasive & Gentle

A comfortable alternative to aggressive resurfacing treatments without anesthetic.

Visible Age Reduction

Skin analysis reports age reduction of 7-14 years after a single treatment session.



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ESTHETICIANS VS. STATE REGULATIONS:

Esthetics Council Leads National Push for Licensing Reform


Susanne Schmaling

Image courtesy of Susanne Schmaling

By Jamie O'Toole

Susanne Schmaling, president and founder of the Esthetics Council, an education and advocacy organization for licensed estheticians[1], has remained at the front lines of state restrictions that estheticians are facing–affecting the limitations of their licenses and certifications as the Council advocates for better clarification and allowance of estheticians to practice their trained skills.

In the U.S., states have implemented regulations that restrict what an esthetician is able to do with their licenses and certifications in modalities like microneedling and lasers at med spas, classifying these services within medical jurisdictions and making their qualifications subordinate to physician expertise in medical settings.

"I have had to stop offering chemical peels, LED and hydradermabrasion–all of which were previously considered part of esthetic practice and are now being designated as medical treatments."

"I have had to stop offering chemical peels, LED and hydradermabrasion–all of which were previously considered part of esthetic practice and are now being designated as medical treatments," says Terri Wojak, a licensed esthetician in Illinois, who is affected by the regulations on her career. "This has been difficult for clients who have relied on these services as part of their skincare regimen."

Schmaling, who is also a licensed master esthetician and certified laser technician, actively attending and monitoring the legislative meetings across various states that work to implement these precautions, says among the states with the strictest regulations underway are California, Idaho, Illinois and Florida.

Navigating Esthetician Limitations Across States for Advanced Cosmetic Procedures

In California, Schmaling says laser hair removal and other laser-based procedures are classified as medical acts, restricted to physicians, RNs, PAs or NPs. Estheticians may not fire lasers under B&P Code §&7426 and Title 16 CCR §991. Effective July 1, 2013, the Medical Board of California added Section 1364.50 to Article 10, Chapter 13, Title 16 of the California Code of Regulations that states the use of laser or intense pulse light devices are to be performed by physician assistants and other licensed health care providers.[2]

California Code of Regulations Title 16 §991 defines invasive procedures, including those that penetrate the skin beyond the epidermis, as outside the scope of practice for estheticians. Laser hair removal involves such penetration and is therefore considered an invasive procedure[3].

"This means that a medical assistant technically cannot be supervised," Schmaling says. "Estheticians are not allowed to be supervised under their legal license in many states and must act as medical assistants if allowed."

In Idaho, the State Board of Cosmetology specifies that laser treatments, including microneedling with RF, fall outside an esthetician's scope, requiring the involvement of a medical director to oversee these procedures[4].

Wojak says working under supervision, as she experiences in Illinois, proposes several barriers. Finding a physician willing to delegate under the current guidelines in Illinois can be challenging, as doctors may be hesitant to assume liability for treatments performed by others. The financial arrangement, too, can be expensive.

"Physician oversight often requires a significant percentage of service revenue and/or monthly fees, [and] the coordination with a medical professional can disrupt the flow of business, limiting time for them to see other patients," she says.

The Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) and the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) issued a memo on Dec. 2, 2024, clarifying the scope of practice for estheticians. According to the memo, estheticians are prohibited from using any technique, product or practice intended to affect the living layers of the skin. This includes procedures such as microneedling, deeper chemical peels, laser treatments and most device-based services unless they are delegated by a licensed physician within a valid physician-patient relationship[5].

Wojak says her clients are used to getting superficial chemical peels at her spa with no downtime. They may now go to their doctor and ask for a chemical peel thinking it will be the same, but it will be a different experience with stronger acids and most likely downtime, she adds.

Wojak has reached out to the IDFPR for clarification regarding the scope of practice under the new guidelines. The responses she's received have been open to interpretation, leading estheticians to be unaware of the new guidelines or misunderstand their implications. A recognized "master esthetician" license or tiered licensing system would be incredibly beneficial for Illinois, she adds. This tiered approach could include advanced certifications for specific treatments, such as microneedling, dermaplaning and chemical peels, allowing estheticians who undergo additional training to legally perform these procedures without requiring physician oversight.

"It would also provide clarity to clients about the level of expertise an esthetician holds, fostering greater trust

and ensuring safe, consistent treatment outcomes," Wojak says.

Florida Admin. Code R.61G5-18.00015 specifically defines microneedling as beyond an esthetician's scope, and thereby must be performed in a medical setting[6]. Microblading and any "bodily intrusion" devices follow the same rule, Schmaling adds.

"The statement that all medical spas are medical practices changes how these businesses operate, especially when looking at corporate practice of medicine laws," Schmaling says.

Pushing for Progress: Esthetic Council Advocates for Scope Reform, Tiered Licensing and Regulatory Modernization

Some of the Esthetic Council's advocacy includes legislative monitoring using the Council's GPT-powered bill tracker and regular review of state board rulemaking dockets. They are also drafting model legislation to modernize cosmetology acts—clarifying Class II device language and defining advanced-training standards.

The campaigns the Council represents include formal objections, including to the Illinois memo, petitions and resist-text messaging to key legislators. The Council also conducts regulator education via state board inspector training modules on the safety profile of modern esthetic devices, as well as coalition building among esthetician associations, allied health professionals and consumer-safety advocates to present a unified front.

The end goal for Schmaling would be a modern scope of practice that allows for independent professional growth by use of the latest modalities and non-invasive technologies, allowing estheticians to be able to support their families and have opportunities for growth.

"We want appropriate training that ensures skill and safety, and in this current regulatory environment the most likely fix is a second tier license with a clause about medical supervision and clear modality categories defined in law or regulation," she says. "The prohibition on non-ablative laser use including hair removal needs to be removed or refined in most states."

CEU's, Schmaling adds, would be desirable as well, as a cosmetology scope should be separated from an advanced scope for esthetics due to the training requirements–a hybrid of beauty and wellness.



The Council conducts regulator education via state board inspector training modules on the safety profile of modern esthetic devices as well as coalition building among esthetician associations, allied health professionals and consumer-safety advocates to present a unified front to advocate reform.

Wojak would like to see Illinois adopt a more progressive and clearly defined esthetics licensing structure, implementing a tiered system that includes a "master esthetician" or "advanced esthetician" license to bridge the gap between basic and advanced esthetics. Greater collaboration between state regulatory boards and esthetic industry leaders could ensure that guidelines are reflective of evolving technologies and treatments, she adds, to align state laws with modern esthetic practices to enhance safety, client care and the professional integrity of the industry.

"The over medicalization of beauty is putting many estheticians out of business," Schmaling says. "I am not sure of the timeline–legislative work can take years, but if we can finally organize the industry, this could move quickly." ME

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NEW SURVEYS SHOW PREVENTIVE AESTHETICS BOOMS AMONG YOUNGER GENERATIONS

By Jamie O'Toole

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FACIAL PLASTIC and Reconstructive Surgery(AAFPRS) reports that 32% of facelift and facial rejuvenation patients are now between the ages of 35–55[1]. Gen X and Millennials are taking interest in preventative measures against rapid weight loss, wrinkles, discoloration and overall aging. McKinsey's 2025 Future of Wellness survey concurs. Younger generations, including Gen Z, are expressing more interest in beauty and wellness than ever before compared to previous years, demonstrating a widespread proactive approach to aging that older generations didn't dabble in as much at these ages.



Younger patients undergoing facelifts and facial rejuvenation are acting to slow down the signs of aging before they occur whereas older ones look to correct nature's course.

HOW GEN Z AND MILLENNIALS ARE REDEFINING AGING AND WELLNESS

The goals of younger patients and older patients look similar: a fresher look without looking "done," says Grace Peng, MD FACS, board member for the AAFPRS. However, younger patients undergoing facelifts and facial rejuvenation are acting to slow down the signs of aging before they occur whereas older ones look to correct nature's course.

McKinsey's survey found that nearly 30% of Gen Zers and millennials in the United States report prioritizing wellness "a lot more" compared with one year ago, versus up to 23% of older generations[2]. The report concludes younger generations are taking a proactive approach to healthy aging rather than a reactive one, turning to products that promote longevity and relying on cosmetic procedures that intervene ahead of time.

The line between wellness and beauty continues to blur for these age groups, as "better appearance" shifted from the sixth-most-important dimension of health and wellness for U.S. Gen Z consumers in 2023 to the third-most-important dimension in 2024[2]. The survey found that 46% of consumers and 53% of Gen Z consumers in the U.S. spent more on cosmetic procedures in 2024 than in 2023[2].

While Gen Zers and millennials make up 36% of the adult population in the United States, they drive more than 41% of annual wellness spend, and consumers aged 58 and older make up 35% of the population but only 28% of wellness spending, per the report.

FROM FILLERS TO SCULPTRA: THE SHIFT TOWARD ROUTINE LOW-DOSE, PREVENTIVE AESTHETICS AMONG YOUNGER CONSUMERS

While surgical intervention remains in demand, minimally invasive treatments now account for 80% of the procedures these generations seek for facial rejuvenation as they express less interest in invasive surgical procedures[1]. Common concerns for individuals who routinely use these mechanisms express concerns with acne scars, skin discoloration, as well as fine lines and wrinkles.

Neurotoxins like Botox and dermal fillers remain the go-to treatments for facial rejuvenation among younger patients, with 90% of AAFPRS surgeons performing these procedures regularly[1]. Baby Botox is by far the most increased treatment that younger patients are requesting, as patients are now very well educated when it comes to risks of procedures, and are straying away from invasive procedures that may carry more risk, says Linda Lee, MD, FACS, also a board member of the AAFPRS.

"I'm seeing a lot of younger patients interested in maintenance, protection of skin rather than any dramatic changes," she adds. "Patients are also more interested in low-dose treatments, and customizing natural treatments such as Baby Botox to prevent frown lines and forehead wrinkles from sticking."

Peng agrees that neuromodulators such as Botox are very routinely used by patients and even younger patients now as prevention for aging. Relaxing the muscles with neurotoxins prevents wrinkles and deeper set lines later, especially in the glabellar region, the forehead, and the periorbital region, where the crows feet manifest, she explains.

The other non-surgical treatment more young people are requesting is Sculptra, which is a biostimulator, Lee says. While people are still interested in small amounts of temporary filler, many are now shifting priorities to slowing

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down collagen loss and stimulating natural collagen to avoid the look of over-filler and intervene at the root of aging.

"I do still caution patients that even maintenance treatments such as Botox and Sculptra always carry some risk, and they are not right for everyone," she adds. "There is a 'too young' to start even maintenance procedures, so a consultation with a board certified provider is so important."

SURGERY STILL PLAYS A ROLE IN ACHIEVING DRAMATIC REJUVENATION

Lee believes that while regenerative therapies can slow down the process, and for some patients it may help them achieve a desired result to no longer need or consider surgery, regenerative therapies will not fully replace the more dramatic results that can be achieved with surgical interventions, like a facelift that these generations also rely on, typically after undergoing rapid weight loss.

Another surgical intervention young patients have been commonly seeking for rejuvenation in the face is fat grafting, Peng says. The procedure involves harvesting fat from the abdomen, inner thighs or flanks and then injecting into areas of the face that may be lacking volume.

BIOCOMPATIBLE BEAUTY: HOW PRP AND EXOSOMES ARE ELEVATING NATURAL REJUVENATION

Lee and Peng report regenerative medicine like PRP and exosomes have begun reshaping minimally invasive outcomes as younger generations learn about biocompatible aesthetics for anti-aging. Many will combine microneedling with PRP at the same time as neuromodulators such as Botox, Peng says.

Most microneedling patients wish to improve not only skin texture, but also skin discoloration such as sunspots, old acne scars and hyperpigmentation. Peng provides a regimen of alternating peels with microneedling with PRP so that after a few months and a series of treatments, there is noticible improvement in their skin.

Lee says while patients often combine Botox treatment with microneedling and PRP, these cannot be done on the same day, but they are often done sequentially as they work differently and for different areas of the face. Patients do, however, combine Baby Botox and baby filler on the same day.

Platelet rich plasma and exosomes, because of its growth factors within it, have enhanced results of microneedling but also fat cell survival after fat grafting procedures, she explains, making it an additional rejuvenative boost for these kinds of facial treatments.

MORE MEN ARE TURNING TO COSMETIC TREATMENTS AND GLP-1S FOR CONFIDENCE

While men have become more keen to undergo cosmetic treatments for facial rejuvenation more than in previous years due to digital age obligations like Zoom meetings, men are also partaking in GLP-1 for weight loss. Losing a significant amount of weight and having hanging or loose skin in the neck, necklifts as well as non-invasive facial rejuvenation have pulled them into the 32%, Lee says.

"For many males, filler and volume restoration is often about subtly restoring hollowness in the cheeks to appear less tired, in addition to appearing more youthful."

"For many males, filler and volume restoration is often about subtly restoring hollowness in the cheeks to appear less tired, in addition to appearing more youthful," she adds.

More than a third of Gen Z and millennial consumers in the United States and the United Kingdom find it very difficult to manage their weight[2]. While exercise remains the most common weight management intervention across markets, GLP-1s have risen in popularity for patients who are focused on meeting their nutritional and health needs while reducing caloric intake[2].

With a clear preference for minimally invasive treatments, younger generations are prioritizing maintenance and long-term skin health over dramatic transformation. Their openess to technology and personalization is reflected in an increased wellness spending and early adoption of cosmetic procedures. This points to a cultural shift focused on aging graciously online and offline. ME

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Aids Non-Physicians Amid Growing Concerns Over Medspa Laser Therapy Safety

By Jamie O'Toole

Non-physicians such as nurses, aestheticians and cosmetologists administer laser treatments in medspas with proper training and supervision established by a licensed physician, though rules and regulations vary nationwide. While non-physicians may be licensed in laser modalities, they may lack in-depth dermatologic knowledge of skin types and conditions, increasing the risk of burns, scarring or ineffective treatment, especially those unsupervised[1]. In recent studies, AI imaging has shown the potential to support licensed providers in making more precise skin assessments to avoid potential complications in medspas.

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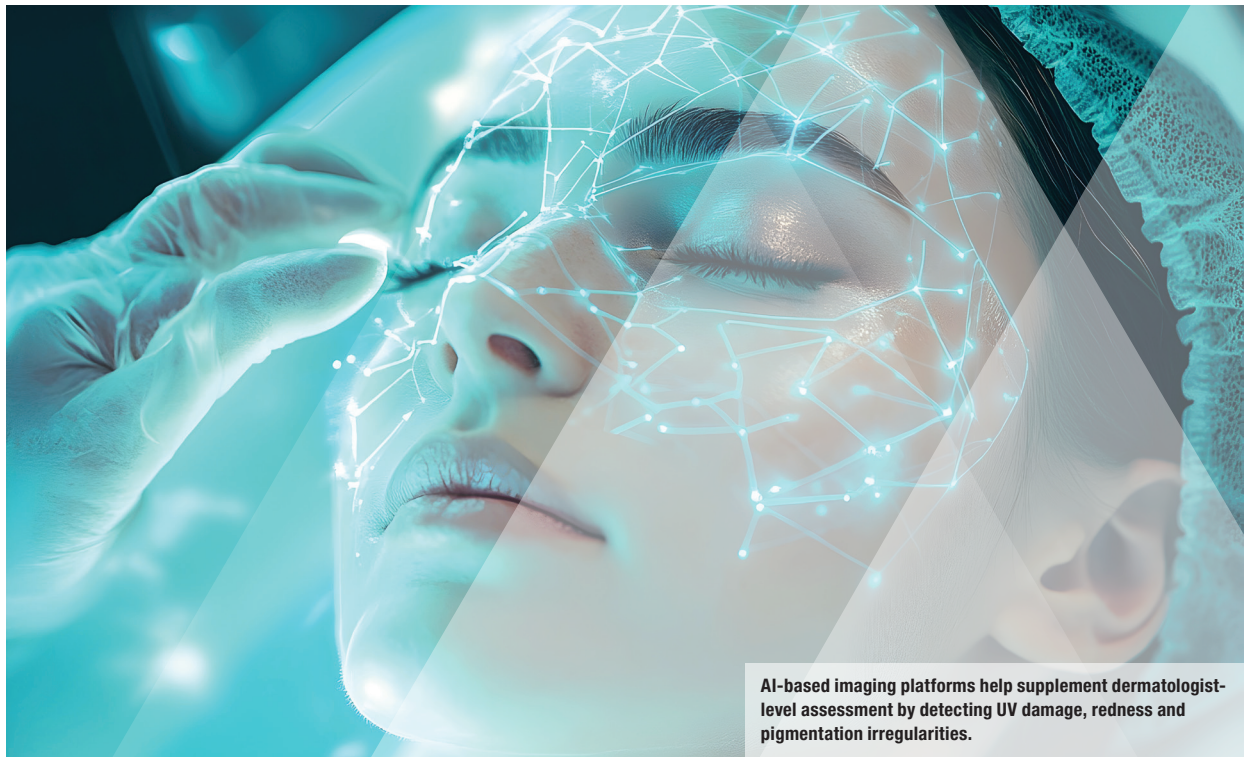
Artificial Intelligence Aids Non-Physicians Amid Growing Concerns Over Medspa Laser Therapy Safety



AI-based imaging platforms help supplement dermatologist-level assessment by detecting UV damage, redness and pigmentation irregularities.

A 2020 study by Dermalogic Surgery[2] reported the percentage of complications seen in medspas ranged from 61% to 100%, with the most commonly cited complications being burn, discoloration and misplacement of product. Among the most commonly cited treatments resulting in complications was laser hair removal.

This leads practitioners to believe medical spas could be endangering patient safety as outcomes in medical spas were rated as inferior to physician-based practices—calling for stricter regulations[2]. Fortunately, machine learning models have recently shown capability in predicting multiple skin characteristics from color photographs of the face, evaluating skin characteristics such as Fitzpatrick skin type, hyperpigmentation, redness and wrinkle severity simultaneously[3].

How AI Technology Enhances Skin Analysis in Cosmetic Dermatology

AI-based imaging platforms help supplement dermatologist-level assessment by detecting UV damage, redness and pigmentation irregularities to support treatment protocols for a comprehensive and individualized laser therapy, though trained manual judgement by a licensed professional in administering lasers is necessary.

Azza Halim, MD, a board-certified physician and anesthesiologist, who has been mentored and trained by surgeons and dermatologists, creates anti-aging treatments at her practice where she specializes in laser therapy.

As a physician, she conducts a consultation consisting of visual skin analysis, patient intake forms, and often, a Fitzpatrick skin typing questionnaire along with Emage imaging and quantificare 3D digital photography to evaluate pigmentation, vascular conditions, pores, chronological vs biological age, photo damage and wrinkle depth.

AI and laser technology has become a strong collaboration in cosmetic dermatology, marked by improved outcomes and greater safety and personalization for practitioners in medspas and even physicians–both of which may lack an in-depth background in dermatology specifically.

"Subtle pigmentation issues or vascular concerns are not easily visible to the naked eye, and lighting conditions or even makeup can mask true skin characteristics which is why I start with a clean face along with imaging systems to accurately evaluate all skin types and determine what products and lasers are best for them to avoid risk of complications like PIH or burns," Halim says.

AI in Aesthetics: A Support Tool, Not a Substitute for Clinical Judgment

This, Halim says, is why digital imaging is very valuable compared to manual methods that have limitations.

The machine learning model, EfficientNet-V2M architecture, was among the best performing in analyzing skin[3]. On average, the model achieved an accuracy of 85.41% on the test set across all labels, while the average AUROC was 0.83[3], demonstrating that AI-driven dermatologic assessment models can analyze the skin on a dermatologist-level for laser therapy planning.

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An ideal AI tool for practitioners would support skin typing, identify patient skin goals and timelines and help develop customized treatment protocols, along with built-in risk flagging.

In the future, similar models could assist non-dermatologists in patient skin evaluation to enhance treatment planning to avoid cited complications [2], as 81% of med spas surveyed in Chicago alone did not have a supervising physician on site[4]. Regulations, however, differ by state.

Cindy Vo, BSN, RN, an aesthetic registered nurse at Serenity Aesthetics & Wellness, who also specializes in laser therapy, says as a registered nurse she cannot make diagnoses, which can be challenging during consultations, but to manually assess the skin, she visually examines the patient's skin tone and quality and evaluates textural changes, such as scarring or raised lesions through touch, making notes of diagnosed conditions like melasma or rosacea.

"I would be open to using AI technology, but I would use it alongside my own clinical assessments rather than relying on it entirely," Vo says. "Having objective and consistent data, especially for detecting subtle pigment changes, would be a valuable tool to support decision-making."

Her main concern is that newer devices can be affected by factors like poor lighting or software malfunctions, which can impact accuracy. Even with regular photography, lighting conditions can differ significantly from what is seen in person, she says, so she would continue to do traditional assessments, but incorporate AI tools to aid.

The Ideal AI for Laser Therapy: Enhancing Safety, Customization and Communication in Aesthetic Care

An ideal AI tool for Vo would support skin typing, identify patient skin goals and timelines and help develop customized treatment protocols, along with built-in risk flagging for conditions or contraindications. It would also be valuable for tracking progress over time, integrating seamlessly with EMR systems, and providing patient-friendly visuals to clearly explain treatment options and expected outcomes, she adds.

Halim, though she currently utilizes imaging systems to assess skin quality as a physician, says an AI-based Fitzpatrick and/or Baumann skin typing along with automated detection of pigmentation, redness and texture issues would help her treatment plans. Educational value explaining risk factors or suggesting pre/post-care tips would also be beneficial, she adds.

"Currently the system I use integrates some of this but would be better if it was all encompassing," Halim adds.

While AI-assisted tools have proven to be useful to physicians like Halim in skin detection, manual methods using discernment is crucial, as Halim and Vo agree, saying that AI would absolutely support better outcomes yet will not replace clinical assessments and decisions, with ways to go with accuracy and inclusivity. As AI assists in skin assessments to avoid potential risks or harm, judgment in treatment direction and proper use of modalities from physicians and licensed practitioners is here to stay.

"I do think AI will become a standard tool, especially as client expectations for precision and personalization continue to grow, and as we see the medspa industry evolving quickly, AI has the potential to raise the bar in safety, accuracy and outcomes," Halim says. "Of course, adoption and implementation will depend on cost, training and the reliability of the technicians; it's only a matter of time." ME

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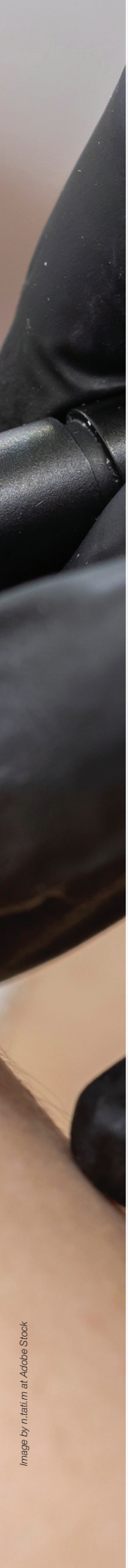

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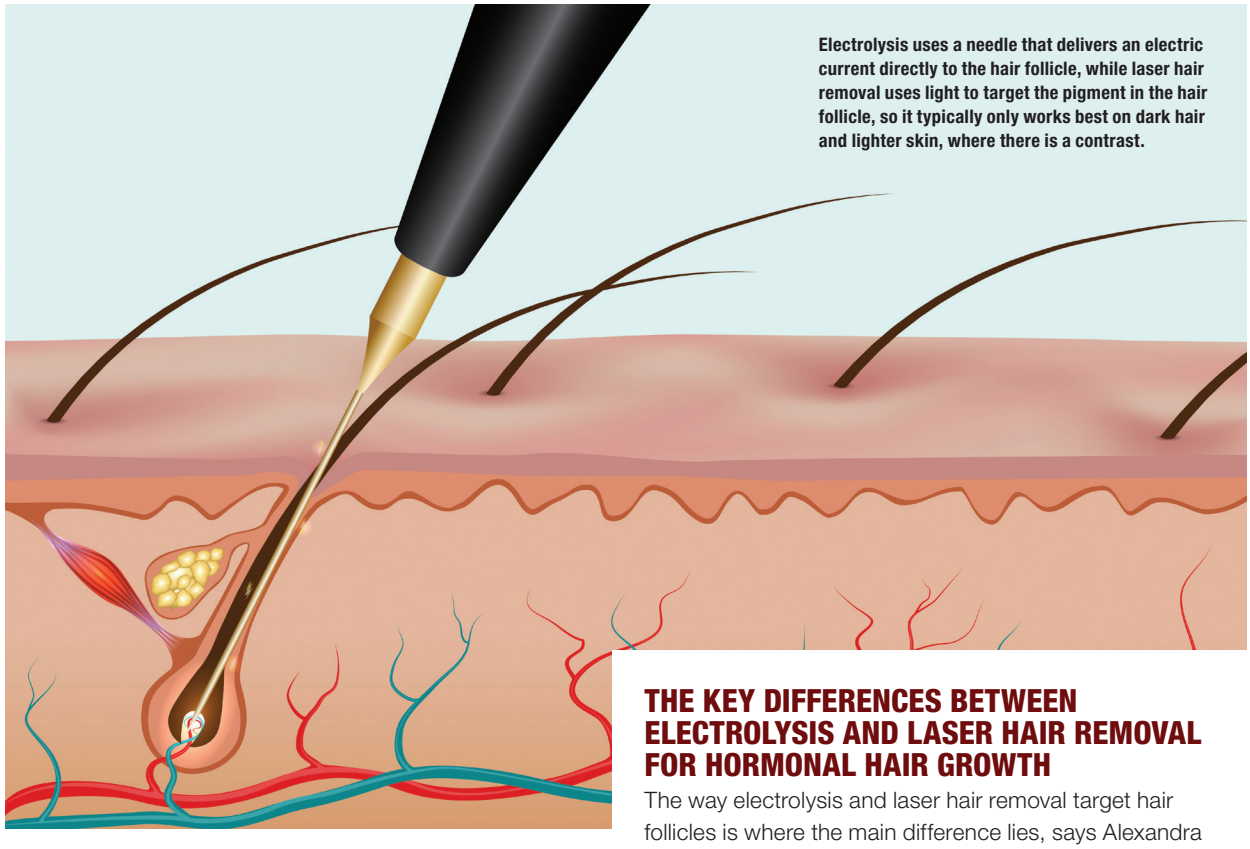
WHY MORE PROS ARE TURNING TO ELECTROLYSIS:

The Only FDA-Approved Permanent Hair Removal Option, Empowering Trans and PCOS Clients

By Jamie O'Toole

Women experience unwanted hair growth, but for women with PCOS and transgender individuals, hair growth in male-pattern distribution can lead to frustration and distress. As a result, the demand for permanent hair removal solutions grows. Electrolysis has emerged as a preferred method due to its effectiveness on all skin tones and hair types—and notably, it remains the only permanent hair removal technique approved by the TGA and FDA, unlike laser treatments, which are not permanent or suitable for all skin.



Electrolysis uses a needle that delivers an electric current directly to the hair follicle, while laser hair removal uses light to target the pigment in the hair follicle, so it typically only works best on dark hair and lighter skin, where there is a contrast.

Industry trends indicate that laser hair removal is more commonly offered by aesthetic practices due to its efficiency in treating larger areas, popularity in beauty and its shorter session duration. However, electrolysis–tiny electric currents–destroy the follicle entirely, preventing future hair growth altogether as a long-term solution that will later lead to zero upkeep in the future. Many women with PCOS and transgender individuals, however, who sometimes remove hair to affirm their identities and reclaim confidence, are unaware it exists.

For Marta Ivaskevych, founder of IMS Electrolysis, electrolysis treatments helped her gain back her confidence after she was diagnosed with PCOS at 18 years old. Being diagnosed with PCOS caused her self-esteem to plummet, and she avoided social interactions, even mirrors, until she discovered electrolysis treatment. Her results inspired her to become a certified electrologist and help others who feel lost and defeated by hormonal hair growth.

"As the treatments progressed, I began to feel a sense of control I hadn't had in years," Ivaskevych describes. "Electrolysis didn't just help me with the hair—it helped me reclaim my confidence and my life; slowly, I felt like myself again, and that transformation inspired me to become a certified electrologist."

THE KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN ELECTROLYSIS AND LASER HAIR REMOVAL FOR HORMONAL HAIR GROWTH

The way electrolysis and laser hair removal target hair follicles is where the main difference lies, says Alexandra Bowles, a medical and cosmetic dermatologist. Electrolysis uses a needle that delivers an electric current directly to the hair follicle, while laser hair removal uses light to target the pigment in the hair follicle, so it typically only works best on dark hair and lighter skin, where there is a contrast between hair and skin color.

"Unlike laser hair removal, electrolysis is not limited by skin tone or hair color, which is particularly important for those with PCOS, as facial hair may range in color and thickness," says Ivaskevych.

There are three electrolysis methods: Galvanic, thermolysis or blend. Galvanic causes a chemical reaction that neutralizes the hair follicle's ability to grow hair, while thermolysis generates heat that destroys the follicle and surrounding tissue. Blend is a combination of both methods, destroying the hair follicle with a powerful dual approach.

The type of method is based on factors like the client's hair type, skin sensitivity, treatment area and how the hair responds to previous sessions. The procedure can be performed on all parts of the body, including the eyebrows, but typically targets the legs, underarms and face.

The precision of electrolysis is unmatched, Ivaskevych adds, making it ideal for delicate facial areas like the upper lip, chin and jawline, where unwanted PCOS-related hair is often most prominent.

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Hair removal for women with PCOS and also transgender individuals isn't always a beauty preference that can be managed with lasers or waxing, as male-pattern growth is more complex. Removal is a way to feel secure in their identities permanently.

ELECTROLYSIS OFFERS MORE LASTING RESULTS FOR HORMONAL HAIR GROWTH, DESPITE A LONGER INITIAL TREATMENT PLAN

Aesthetic practitioners typically include laser hair removal in their offerings because it targets large areas with shorter sessions, but maintenance is where the difference between electrolysis and laser hair removal can be more noticeable for people with PCOS, or male-pattern hair growth due to hormones, Bowles says.

Since electrolysis treats each follicle individually, Bowles has found that it tends to offer longer-lasting results with fewer maintenance sessions, even as hormones fluctuate. Laser hair removal, while effective, may require more frequent touch-ups as hormones can cause hair to regrow.

Complete and permanent hair removal with electrolysis takes several sessions, typically between 10 to 12 treatments, especially if the hair has been growing for an extended period due to PCOS, Ivaskevych says. This is because hair grows in different stages–growth, rest and shedding phases, and electrolysis can only treat hair in the growth phase, or anagen phase.

"Since not all hairs are in the same phase at the same time, multiple sessions are needed to catch hairs in the optimal growth stage," she explains.

In the beginning, electrolysis treatments are typically spaced every 1-2 weeks for the first few months, and as the hair density reduces, sessions can be spaced every 4-6 weeks. After 10-12 treatments, hair will stop growing in unwanted areas, whereas maintenance sessions for laser removal are often needed every 6-12 months, Ivaskevych says.

After the initial series of electrolysis treatments, some individuals may require occasional touch-ups in the future, Ivaskevych adds, especially if hormonal fluctuations from PCOS continue to affect new hair follicles or cause regrowth in areas that may have been missed during earlier sessions.

"If you have PCOS, both treatments will likely require some ongoing care, but electrolysis might be the better option for those who want a more permanent solution," Bowles says.

POST-TREATMENT CARE: WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER ELECTROLYSIS OR LASER HAIR REMOVAL

Fine blood scabs are a normal reaction to electrolysis treatment, especially in the initial stages, and may take between 7-21 days to heal, Ivaskevych says.

Witch hazel and aloe vera gel should be applied liberally post-treatment, using a clean, damp cotton wool immediately after to soothe, calm redness and prevent infection, she adds, and patients should continue applying aloe vera gel for the next 2-3 days.

To prevent irritation and the spread of infection, she advises not to pick at the small blood scabs that may appear a couple of days after treatment. She recommends using UV protection and avoiding direct sunlight exposure post-treatment to avoid post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation.

Image by kittyfly at Adobe Stock





Unlike laser hair removal, electrolysis is not limited by skin tone or hair color, which is particularly important for those with PCOS, as facial hair may range in color and thickness.

Laser hair removal tends to be less uncomfortable than electrolysis, Bowles says, as laser treatments usually feel like a quick snap or sting, whereas electrolysis can feel more intense–involving a needle inserted into each hair follicle.

Laser therapy reactions, on the other hand, include redness, swelling or mild irritation as the tissue begins to heal and regenerate–another common reason many medspas offer laser removal.

"For those with PCOS, skin sensitivity can be a concern, so it's good to be prepared for some redness or irritation after either treatment," Bowles says. "Electrolysis might cause a bit more post-treatment irritation, especially if your skin is more reactive."

EXPANDING YOUR AESTHETIC PRACTICE: WHAT IT TAKES TO GET CERTIFIED IN ELECTROLYSIS

While the initial cost of electrolysis sessions might be higher compared to other hair removal methods, the long-term savings are substantial, as it involves less repeated expenses and eventual permanence[1]. Hair growth affects clients in a multitude of ways–some interested in waxing, laser or a permanent solution like electrolysis. Depending on the investment a client wants to make, an array of hair removal options open doors for a more diverse clientele.

For electrolysis training to become an electrologist, you must be at least 16 years old, although many states only accept 17 and 18 year olds into licensing programs, and you'll likely need a high school diploma or GED[2]. Electrology training programs can be completed within a year, varying on where you live. Each state sets its own licensing requirements, including a set number of training hours that must be completed before qualifying[2].

Licensure requirements vary widely from state to state. Michigan requires 400 hours of electrology training, while Indiana will require a completed 1,500-hour cosmetology course or a 700-hour esthetics course, plus an additional 300-hour electrology course[2].

WHY PERMANENT HAIR REMOVAL MATTERS FOR PCOS AND GENDER-AFFIRMING CARE IN AESTHETICS

PCOS is often uncontrollable and life altering for many women, affecting their hormones, appearance and fertility. Hyperandrogenisma in women with PCOS shows a prevalence estimated at 65–75%[3], and while research is still developing on managing PCOS symptoms, permanent hair removal allows many women to feel more confident.

Hair removal for women with PCOS and also transgender individuals isn't always a beauty preference that can be managed with lasers or waxing, as male-pattern growth is more complex. Removal is a way to feel secure in their identities permanently. Adding electrolysis to service offerings could allow practitioners and estheticians to cater to a broader clientele, as aesthetics is a space for everyone and all beauty goals.

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Hyperandrogenisma: A medical condition characterized by excessive levels of androgens (male hormones) in the body, often leading to symptoms like acne, hirsutism (excess hair growth), and irregular menstrual cycles in females.

Jamie O'Toole is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics*.

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Lushful Aesthetics

Opens New San Diego Location as Male Sexual Wellness Treatments Gain Mainstream Appeal

By Jamie O'Toole

New York-based Lushful Aesthetics announced the opening of its new branch located in San Diego amidst a 200% surge in requests for sexual wellness treatments–the most sought after being Penis Filler, ScroFill and HoleTox–renowned by founder Chris Bustamante, DNP, NP-C. With Bustamante's specialized training in sexual health urology, proctology and aesthetic medicine, he has combined clinical expertise with artistic precision to create a distinct approach to sexual enhancement–recognized by marginalized communities in particular.

Image by Studio Romantic at Adobe Stock



With founder Chris Bustamante, DNP, NP-C's training in sexual health urology, proctology and aesthetic medicine, the combination has allowed him to exercise his artistry and develop a distinct technique to Penis Filler, ScroFill and HoleTox procedures at Lushful.

Appointed as Chief Medical Director at Lushful is Carlton Thomas, MD, a Mayo Clinic-trained board-certified gastroenterologist, who is known on the internet as the "Gay GI Doctor." Thomas will oversee medical operations for the new San Diego clinic alongside Bustamente[1]. The new branch will be located at 1150 Silverado St, Suite 308, La Jolla, California.

"As a long-time supporter, I'm thrilled to collaborate with Chris on this new venture for Lushful Aesthetics, combining our shared passion for advancing innovations in sexual health and wellness," says Thomas.

Bustamante says although Lushful is not the only practice that offers Penis Filler, ScroFill and HoleTox, there is a level of artistry that's especially important for these procedures, crediting the fact that he performs 3-5 Penis Filler treatments a day for the reason he is recognized internationally as an expert in these male enhancement procedures.

Blending Medicine and Pleasure: How HoleTox Is Transforming Anal Comfort and Sexual Wellness for Men

One of Lushful's most popular treatments, HoleTox, Bustamante explains, is a trademarked name for anal Botox. It involves a neuromodulator, such as Botox or Xeomin, to target the internal and external sphincters with the goal of relaxing these muscles. From a therapeutic standpoint, HoleTox can help heal chronic anal fissures, hemorrhoids, post-surgical recovery and chronic anal spasms. From a recreational standpoint, HoleTox makes anal penetration easier and more enjoyable.

"Many men who engage in bottoming have struggled with anal tightness, chronic anal fissures, hemorrhoids and anal spasms for years," Bustamante says. "Despite using anal dilation kits, proper stretching and appropriate lubrication, they still face challenges; HoleTox helps alleviate these issues, allowing individuals to embrace their sexuality and enjoy bottoming with confidence."

Many heterosexual and even some queer medical providers, he says, lack the proper information about procedures like HoleTox as a functional treatment, not an aesthetic treatment. HoleTox is especially popular among gay men; however, Lushful sees an increasing number of female patients each month. Women engage in anal sex, but tend to have fewer resources and information on how to prepare properly and engage in the safest and most pleasurable ways, he adds.

Bustamante learned anal Botox in proctology, and the procedure, he explains, is still currently an off-label indication for Botox.

"Now I'm seeing HoleTox as not just a solution for [spasms, hemorrhoids or fissures], but also a preventative treatment to keep patients from sustaining anal injuries while also improving their comfort during receptive sex," Bustamante says.

Awareness on social media and influencers discussing their experiences with HoleTox at Lushful has been critical for the rapid growth of 200% in requests–common, in particular, for Millennials and Gen Z, who are more open about the treatments they undergo, as well as their sexual experiences.



From top: Image courtesy of Chris Bustamante, DNP, NP-C; Image by Vimolsiri.Sat Adobe Stock

Boosting Confidence Below the Belt: How Penis and Scrotal Fillers Are Reframing Male Enhancement for the Modern Man

Penis filler, on the other hand, is a non-surgical cosmetic procedure using FDA-approved hyaluronic acid dermal filler to augment the girth or thickness of the penis. Bustamante's background in sexual health urology, proctology and aesthetic medicine influenced the development of his own technique and approach to Penis Filler, he says.

"This treatment does not change the length of the penis while erect but does prevent full retraction of the penis when flaccid, so patients look longer when flaccid," he explains.

This treatment differs from other treatments like HoleTox, as it's purely for aesthetic purposes with no negative or positive effects on one's sex life or health. Being a non-surgical procedure, the recovery process is much easier, and the results are much more consistent when compared to surgical enhancements like fat transfers or ligament transection, Bustamante adds.

Bustamante started the ScroFill procedure, using filler, when a patient who came in for a touch-up of his penis filler discussed how he felt insecure about his testicle size, as he'd been on testosterone for several years, leading to testicular atrophy. ScroFill can be performed to enhance the bulge of the patient and go along with penis filler or can be done separately, he explains.

"A lot of men who suffer from testicular atrophy due to age or after being on testosterone replacement therapy benefit from ScroFill because it helps to create the appearance of larger testicles," Bustamante says. "Men find that these procedures optimize their confidence, similar to how women feel getting lip filler or getting their breasts done."



Image courtesy of Chris Bustamante, DNP, NP-C;

The individuals interested in girth enhancement and ScroFill are about a 50/50 split between gay and straight men seeking these treatments. A lot of straight men are interested in the procedure not just for their own self-confidence but also because their female partners have encouraged their interest, he explains.

The Rise of Inclusive Sexual Wellness Treatments for Every Man

While these procedures are common amongst gay men as sexual health and comfort become more widely talked about, Bustamante says men today are overall much more open to discussing aesthetic concerns and sexual wellness than in the past–driven by shifting societal norms that prioritize self-care and encourage men to focus on their appearance, he adds.



Chris Bustamante, DNP, NP-C, founder of Lushful Aesthetics, performing jawline filler on patient.

"This shift is making sexual enhancement procedures more inclusive, empowering people across genders, ages and backgrounds to seek care that enhances quality of life—not just their appearance," he says. "As stigma fades, the sector will likely expand with more personalized, wellness-focused solutions for diverse needs." ME

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Jamie O'Toole is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics.*



ISAPS 2024 Global Survey: U.S. Leads in Cosmetic Procedures, Eyelid Surgery Surpasses Liposuction

The 2024 Global Survey on Aesthetic and Cosmetic Procedures was presented by the International Society of Aesthetic Plastic Surgery at the ISAPS Olympiad World Congress in Singapore. They reported that the U.S. performed the most cosmetic procedures in 2024, followed by Brazil and Japan, with over 6.1 million procedures completed. The survey revealed a 42.5% worldwide increase in cosmetic procedures over the last four years, with practitioners performing 20.5 million non-surgical procedures and plastic surgeons performing over 17.4 million surgical procedures.

2024 Trends in Cosmetic Procedures: Eyelid Surgery Tops the List

Per a June 20 press release, the number of face and head procedures increased by 4.3% from the previous year, 2023, with more than 7.4 million procedures completed. Body and extremity procedures, on the other hand, saw a 14.8% decrease in procedures as face and head went up, with a total of six million procedures performed. Eyelid surgery, in particular, was the top procedure in 2024.

About 2.1 million eyelid surgeries were performed, replacing liposuction as the most common surgical

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The ISAPS 2024 Global Survey on Aesthetic and Cosmetic Procedures revealed a 42.5% worldwide increase in cosmetic procedures over the last four years. Eyelid surgery, in particular, was the top procedure in 2024.

procedure for the first time compared to previous years. Liposuction became the second most common procedure, followed by breast augmentation, scar revision and rhinoplasty.

The liposuction decline comes amid a boom in GLP-1 treatments, which have significant impacts on body shape. While the procedure may be in decline, minimally invasive treatments that address "after" concerns of rapid weight loss, including body contouring, is overall increasingly popular, per Allergan.

Rhinoplasty and breast procedures saw decreases compared to previous years. Rhinoplasty decreased by 10% at one million procedures completed in 2024, and breast procedures decreased by 14.1% at 3.9 million performed. However, fat grafting saw a 19.2% increase, a total of .9 million conducted.

Top Non-Surgical Cosmetic Procedures of 2024: Botulinum Toxin, Fillers, and More

As non-surgical procedures remain more sought out than surgical interventions by over three million, botulinum toxin, hyaluronic acid filler, hair removal, non-surgical skin tightening and chemical peels were among the most popular in 2024. Botulinum toxin remained the most common non-surgical procedure for both men and women–a total of 7.8 million performed–among all age groups, specifically those aged 35–50, per the release. Hyaluronic acid procedures increased by 5.2% at 7.8 million treatments conducted.

Top Cosmetic Procedures by Gender and Age Group

Looking at women specifically, although liposuction wasn't the most popular overall, it is, however, still the most common surgical procedure for this demographic, followed by eyelid surgery and breast augmentation. Eyelid surgery for men, however, was again the most popular surgical procedure, followed by gynecomastia and scar revision.

Liposuction and non-surgical fat reduction were popular procedures across all age groups for women. However, breast augmentations were most common among women aged 18-34, accounting for 54% of patients. Similarly, 60.1% of rhinoplasty patients and 48.4% of those undergoing external genital surgery also fell within this age range. ME

Jamie O'Toole is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics.*

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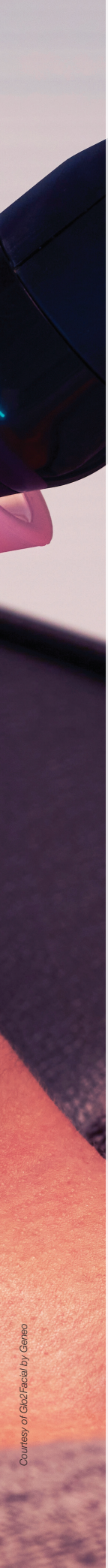

Courtesy of Glo2Facial by Genéo

The Critical Role of Pre-Treatment Skin Conditioning and Lymphatic Therapies

By Jamie O'Toole

Medspas typically curate post-op recovery regimens including personalized skin care routines to support healing, however, while this protocol is certainly important for proper repair and comfortability, pre-treatment skin is equally, if not more important–supporting treatment outcomes by minimizing recovery time and prolonging or enhancing the results through pre-intervention. These therapies, sought to condition the skin for later desired effects, can include specific ingredients that target aging and the formation of collagen and also facials, particularly lymphatic massage to enhance those actives and the face's environment–a cornerstone of pre-treatment regimen and post-procedure recovery in medspas and dermatology practices.



Swissline's Pro-Recovery serum, designed as a pre-intervention to optimize the skin for aesthetic treatment outcomes, contains dipeptide carnosine, a synthetic molecule that is typically produced naturally by our body to fight the glycation process. The molecule contains antioxidant activity that inhibits protein carbonylation and glycoxidation.

Courtesy of Swiss Line

"Before any aesthetic treatment, I assess the skin's hydration, barrier function and any signs of inflammation or underlying disease," says RealSelf dermatologist Sonia Badreshia-Bansal, MD. "This includes evaluating texture, tone, oil production and presence of any active skin conditions like acne or dermatitis."

This evaluation, she adds, will determine whether the skin is ready for procedures or treatment or may need a "prep phase" with barrier-repairing or anti-inflammatory skin care. Because the skin must be in a good state before undergoing minimally invasive or invasive skin treatments, Bansal recommends SPF 40 with zinc and vitamin A cream as an essential prep phase for everyone–the baseline before tailoring to specific needs.

How the Skin's Condition Impacts Treatment Outcomes

Procedures like laser resurfacing, microneedling and chemical peels are particularly dependent on the skin being in a healthy state, and any sign of inflammation, whether there is a larger skin disorder at hand or general irritation, should be treated gently before undergoing procedures.

"These treatments penetrate or disrupt the skin barrier and can lead to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, prolonged healing, or scarring if performed on compromised skin," Bansal says. "Even injectables like filler or neurotoxins yield faster recovery and better results on well-hydrated, healthy skin."

For sensitive skin, an ideal pre-treatment routine should avoid exfoliants or retinoids and instead, ingredients like niacinamide should be applied, she explains. Dry or aging skin specifically needs a ceramide-rich moisturizer and potentially a hyaluronic acid to improve hydration, while oily or acne-prone skin may tolerate gentle exfoliation or salicylic acid but needs close attention to avoid irritation before cosmetic enhancement.

Addressing Inflammation, Glycation, and Sensitivity for Optimal Treatment Outcomes

Tailoring pre-treatment care according to skin needs and the aging process, however, despite distinct signs of redness, flakiness, sensitivity or flare-ups, helps reduce reactivity further and ensures optimal treatment response, especially since stress and environmental or lifestyle factors can vary in reaction depending on the skin, oftentimes leading to cell oxidation, a deficient skin barrier, toxin and water retention, an overstimulated immune system and glycation, says Emilie Angheben, Canada Trainer for Swiss Line by Dermalab.

"In the same way that a surgical operation is statistically more likely to be successful on a healthy patient than on a tired and sick one, an aesthetic procedure requires that the client's skin be healthy," she adds.

Glycation, the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs), are complex heterogeneous molecules formed by the non-enzymatic reaction between reducing sugars and proteins, lipids or nucleic acids that form through normal aging. They trigger inflammatory pathways, accumulating in the skin and amplified through exogenous factors, like ultraviolet radiation–resulting in wrinkles, loss of elasticity, dull yellowing and other skin problems[1].



Procedures like laser resurfacing, microneedling and chemical peels are particularly dependent on the skin being in a healthy state, and any sign of inflammation, whether there is a larger skin disorder at hand or general irritation, should be treated gently before undergoing procedures.

Angheben says AGEs then begin to oxidize, contaminating the surrounding environment. That's why it's important to use a powerful anti-glycation active ingredient in skin care preparation, especially before an aesthetic procedure to reduce skin inflammation and oxidation post-op.

Swissline's Pro-Recovery serum, designed as a pre-intervention to optimize the skin for aesthetic treatment outcomes, contains dipeptide carnosine, a synthetic molecule that is typically produced naturally by the body to fight the glycation process. The molecule contains antioxidant activity that inhibits protein carbonylation and glycoxidation[2].

Training Skin for Transformation: How Lymphatic Techniques and Pre-Treatment Serums Enhance Healing, Circulation and Outcomes

Medspas have incorporated this serum for pre-treatment and post-treatment care, and pair the delivery of the serum with Swiss Line's lymphatic sphere facial technique, Angheben explains. The facial lymph spheres, developed in cooperation with facialist Anna Tsankova, are massage rollers meant to be used following the application of the serum. The spheres are gently rolled over the lymph nodes on the face and neck to reduce inflammation and ensure the overall health of the skin pre-treatment.

It is recommended by Swiss Line to do at least one pro-recovery facial with the spheres a week before the procedure–not too soon before the procedure, as the peeling effect from the facial can be too aggressive for certain procedures. Applying the serum alone should also begin a week before and also during recovery to alleviate discomfort and build the skin barrier.

As the facial lymphatic system along the face and neck play a very important role in preventing infections post-op and ensuring the health of tissues and the skin organ, the spheres work to filter and eliminate bacteria, viruses and other harmful substances from the body via the facial mucous membranes.

"Like muscle conditioning at the gym, facial treatments work in a similar way, coaching the skin how to respond more effectively when introduced to more intense treatments," says Savannah Barrett, director of education at Glo2Facial by Geneo and licensed medical esthetician. "Skin conditioning can improve healing time, tolerance of the treatment and responsiveness to the targeted tissues."

Barrett, who uses the Glo2Facial on her patients who undergo invasive treatments, says the detox setting on the device brings a fresh blood supply to the face area. This circulation to the face reduces redness, while the massage is performed in a lymphatic-draining pattern to decrease puffiness and give the face a final flush, as Barrett describes.

Image by Robert Kneschke at Adobe Stock



Swissline's Pro-Recovery serum, designed as a pre-intervention to optimize the skin for aesthetic treatment outcomes, contains dipeptide carnosine, a synthetic molecule that is typically produced naturally by our body to fight the glycation process. The molecule contains antioxidant activity that inhibits protein carbonylation and glycoxidation.

Using non-invasive mechanisms like the lymphatic spheres and the Glo2Facial device trains the skin cells to heal faster and stronger after more invasive therapies. Undergoing lymphatic massages in a pre-surgery routine has been shown to support pain management by reducing swelling and inflammation post-op while detoxifying the skin for a clear internal environment and boosting the immune system to avoid potential infection[3].

Because lymphatic messages increase circulation in the skin, creating a more receptive environment for ingredients to penetrate the skin, as Swiss Line practices with their serum, the Glo2Facial also includes settings like oxfoliation–the combination of exfoliation and oxygenation that trains the skin to heal from within and stimulate cellular regeneration. It triggers the Bohr Effect, Barrett says–the process of sending a surge of oxygen to the surface to balance the increase of CO_2, allowing for maximum absorption of active ingredients that build the skin barrier for intense treatments in the future.

"As we age, our body naturally has more enzymes that make it difficult to redirect oxygen to the skin," she adds. "When we reestablish the cascade of oxygen flow to the face, we train the body to keep sending oxygen to these pathways."

The ultrasound, additionally used in the facial, releases micro-vibrations to increase the permeability of the skin's protective layer while infusing nourishing ingredients into the basal layer to enhance cell metabolism and boost circulation.

RF Pro, another setting within the device, uses multi-polar radio frequency, synthesizing at the dermis to give a "firming" effect but also train fibroblasts that produce collagen, elastin and hyaluronic acid to replicate and respond more easily over time. The modality uses therapeutic temperature to stimulate wound healing–supporting additional subsequent procedures that also target collagen to sustain the synthesis of new collagen.

Collaborative Pre- and Post-Care Strategies: Strengthen, Protect and Optimize Aesthetic Treatment Outcomes

Barrett adds that estheticians who use Glo2Facial work in collaboration with physicians, dermatologists and plastic surgeons to create a full treatment series for pre or post-procedure care so the patient feels confident in their procedures with proper after-care that supports lasting outcomes.

"Building skin integrity means training the skin to act more youthful," Barrett says. "The treatment… conditions the bonds and cells to be stronger, heal quicker and bank collagen, thus increasing their integrity as the skin ages."

While a gentle routine depending on skin texture with SPF protection is the baseline for defending the skin as it prepares to undergo aesthetic treatments, using active ingredients pre-op, tailored to specific needs, the aging process and conditions, is crucial to ensure desired results are achieved and post-op damage like hyperpigmentation and inflammation do not arise. However, non-invasive modalities and messages–particularly lymphatic drainage–will work to train the skin to endure further intensity while renewing the surface for the ingredients to not only penetrate deeper, but for cosmetic procedures to do as intended, seamlessly, without an excessively painful recovery. ME

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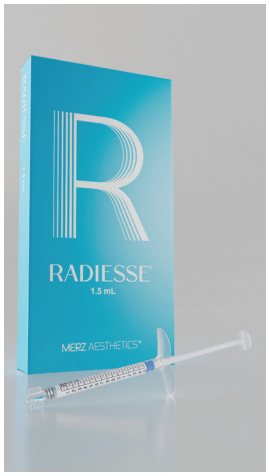
Jamie O'Toole is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics.*

Courtesy of Swiss Line

Mid-Face Contour and Vitality

Revitalize your mid-face with expertly formulated skincare and aesthetic injectables.



Merz **Radiesse** is an FDA-approved dermal filler and a regenerative biostimulator, meaning it is capable of regenerating collagen I& III, which provide structure and support to the skin, as well as elastin to enhance elasticity. Radiesse also regenerates Proteoglycans to increase skin glow and induces Angiogenesis, the development of new blood vessels, which helps sustain new tissue.

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Environ Skincare's **Rad Shield Mineral Sunscreen SPF 30** is a new generation formula that perfectly aligns to the Environ Skin Care's core skincare philosophy of protecting and promoting skin health every single day. Environ has long championed daily sun protection as a non-negotiable step in any skincare routine. New RAD SHIELD Mineral Sunscreen is designed to work synergistically with Environ's vitamin A skincare philosophy for holistic sun protection.

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Induction Therapies' **PEP C-35** is a neuromodulating, 35% active moisturizer designed to deliver mid-face rejuvenation without injections. Its unique formula combines 25% peptides with 10% stabilized vitamin C to visibly firm, brighten, and soften expression lines through topical neuromodulation. Ideal for the cheeks, smile lines, and under-eyes, it supports collagen renewal and barrier repair while delivering lightweight hydration. Perfect for those seeking a"No-Tox Botox" approach to aging, PEP C-35 offers professional-grade results in a luxurious daily cream.Apply morning and night for smoother, lifted, and more radiant skin—no needles required.

Contact: info@inductiontherapies.com, inductiontherapies.com/



Global Beauty's **Firming Peptide Eye Gel** is a lightweight eye gel that delivers firming, cooling, and hydrating effects. The gel is intended for those with sensitive, dehydrated, dull, or dry mid-face and eye area in need of plump peptide rejuvenation. Infused with advanced peptide technology and other nourishing botanical ingredients, it is designed to address signs of aging.

Contact: globalbeauty.net/

DETAILS BY SOLOMON AZOUZ, MD



Tailored, Not Translated Approach to Men's Anatomy and Identity

Men are changing the landscape of aesthetic medicine as it continues to evolve. Male patients, who were often viewed as secondary to cosmetic enhancement, now account for a constantly rising number of aesthetic consultations and procedures. This transformation is not just cultural but also clinical, necessitating a reassessment of both practice and theory.

Customizing procedures for male patients involves more than just changing the dosage or incision lines. It necessitates a complex grasp of masculine anatomy, aesthetic values and psychosocial motivations. The templates created for female patients must give way to a customized, precision-based approach made especially for masculine characteristics and objectives.

Image by Mselected at Adobe Stock

Structural Differences: Masculinity: Form and Function

Masculine facial anatomy differs significantly from female anatomy in terms of skeletal structure and soft tissue distribution. Men typically present with:

- A more pronounced supraorbital ridge and a flatter midface contour
- Wider, squarer mandibles with a greater chin projection
- Thicker skin with increased collagen density
- More active and larger facial muscles

These anatomical distinctions affect surgical and nonsurgical methods. For example, when performing blepharoplasty on male patients, retaining some upper eyelid fullness is crucial to achieving a natural, manly appearance. Overresection can feminize or hollow out the orbital area, resulting in an aesthetic mismatch.

Similarly, with rhinoplasty, the goal is generally to retain or improve nasal strength while avoiding over-refinement of the dorsum or tip, which can compromise the masculine profile. A careful balance between volume and angularity is necessary for chin augmentation or jawline reshaping procedures to produce outcomes that convey power without being overly dramatic or fake.

Customization versus Commodification

Male aesthetic aspirations are diverse, and rising demand has created opportunities and challenges. While it may be tempting to use female-centric protocols or "plug-and-play" treatment paradigms, doing so risks patient dissatisfaction and poor aesthetic results.

Customization begins with the consultation. Surgeons must interact with male patients differently, emphasizing clarity, function and outcome-oriented planning. Male patients commonly seek:

- A more refreshed or alert appearance than a youthful one
- Improved face definition, especially in the jawline and chin
- Corrections that preserve character and power rather than eliminating age completely

Technology plays a vital role in this. High-resolution imaging, 3D morphing and facial mapping enable exact visualization and education, allowing patients to appreciate the benefits of modest modifications without overcorrection.

Injectable Strategy: Precision and Modesty

Male non-surgical procedures such as Botox, dermal fillers and biostimulators require anatomical accuracy and self-control. Overuse or misplacement of injectables can cause feminization or apparent deformity, especially in high-movement areas.

Neurotoxin administration should focus on stronger, hypertrophic facial muscles. Men frequently require more units, although they benefit from more conservative distribution to avoid a frozen or artificial appearance. Maintaining some degree of brow movement and downward angulation, for example, helps to keep a manly look in the glabella.

When using dermal fillers, focus on boosting linear contours such as the mandibular angle, chin projection and lateral cheek, rather than the medial cheek fullness that

BEFORE **AFTER**



Courtesy of Solomon Azouz, MD

Customizing procedures for male patients involves more than just changing the dosage or incision lines. It necessitates a complex grasp of masculine anatomy, aesthetic values and psychosocial motivations.

distinguishes more feminine outcomes. Often, the idea is to sharpen and define rather than soften or volumize.

Psychological Considerations: Identity and Intent

Beyond anatomy and the dosage, psychological sensitivity is crucial. Male patients may present with various motives and expectations. Some people want classic masculine characteristics like chiseled features and a rough build, while others may want to address perceived flaws or look less tired without making major changes.

Importantly, male patients frequently approach treatment with greater trepidation. They may be concerned about overcorrection, the visibility of results or the sense of vanity. Building trust and being transparent are essential when addressing these issues. Often, a steady, low-downtime approach is more desirable than a dramatic one-time intervention.

In certain circumstances, masculinity itself is reinterpreted as fluid, individualized and adaptable. Customization entails being open to how each patient defines their aesthetic identity, rather than imposing rigid models.

Setting a New Standard

The modern aesthetic profession must grow to satisfy male patients' needs in a customized, physically sound, and psychologically attentive manner. It is not sufficient to provide processes that "also work for men." We must create protocols, methodologies and educational materials with male-specific results in mind.

Incorporating masculine aesthetics into a medical practice is more than merely growing the patient base. It is about raising the standard of care and acknowledging that genuine customization is the future of aesthetic medicine. As more men are seeking to improve their appearances, it is our obligation as surgeons to produce results that are both technically precise as well as true to the patient's identity. ME



Solomon Azouz, MD is a board-certified plastic surgeon who specializes in aesthetic and reconstructive surgery. He is dedicated to advancing customized care and natural outcomes using anatomically informed, patient-centered approaches.



QUILTING FACELIFTS: THE BRAZILIAN TECHNIQUE REDUCING BLEEDING AND BOOSTING RESULTS POST-OZEMPIC

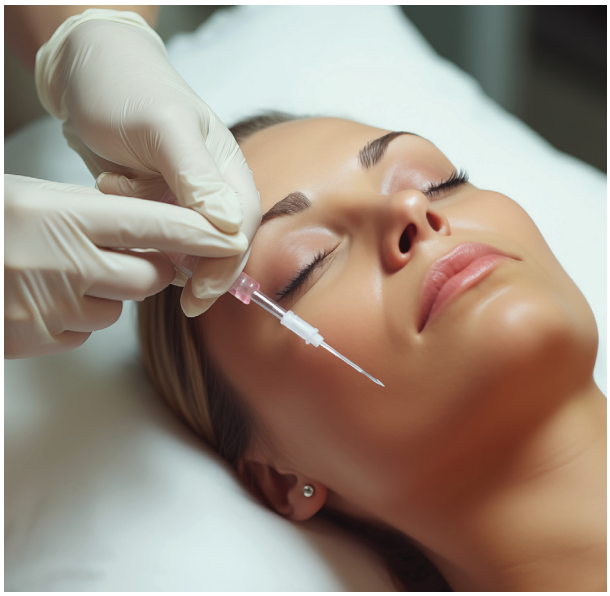


The quilting technique, a method originating in Brazil, is not new to U.S. facelift procedures, initially used internally, beneath the skin after finishing a facelift to eliminate the potential space created between the layers of tissues. Most recently, however, the procedure has gained attraction for external quilting, or "hemostatic netting," especially as surgeons increasingly practice facelifts compared to previous years since the rise of GLP-1 use and preventive aesthetics. The use of this technique is shown to reduce the incidence of post-surgical bleeding and risk of skin compromise, or necrosis.

PLADUOPRO COMBINES ARGON AND NITROGEN FOR CONSISTENT PLASMA TREATMENTS WITH SPIN-SHOT CONTROL

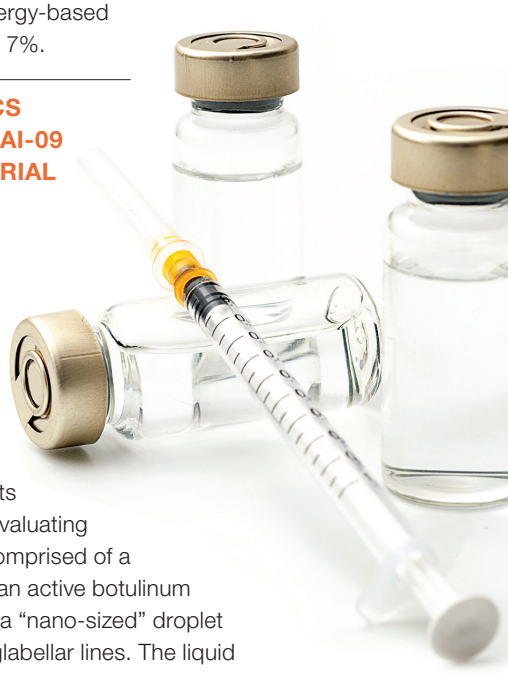
Aesthetic Management Partners has launched PLADUOpro, a dual argon and nitrogen gas plasma system for skin restoration that includes a Spin-Shot technology, designed to avoid inconsistent gas ionization–a result of over 20 years of research by Shenb, the manufacturer of the device. Argon was chosen for its antibacterial properties and safety profile, helping cleanse the skin and minimize bacterial load, while nitrogen is well-studied for promoting cell turnover and skin renewal.

NEUROTOXINS LEAD $17.5 BILLION NON-SURGICAL AESTHETIC MARKET



Guidepoint Qsight Data recently showed that neurotoxins lead the $17.5 billion non-surgical aesthetics market. The current state of aesthetics is meeting a demand for more natural-looking results and more subtle enhancements, meaning that other uses for neurotoxins in aesthetics have grown in popularity, like improving skin texture and elasticity. While neurotoxins and skin rejuvenation reign supreme, spending on energy-based devices has decreased by 7%.

EIRION THERAPEUTICS UNVEILS PROMISING AI-09 LIQUID BOTULINUM TRIAL RESULTS AT 2025 SID MEETING



At the 2025 annual meeting of the Society for Investigative Dermatology that took place in San Diego, California on May 7-10, Eirion Therapeutics Inc., a biopharmaceutical company, presented results from recent clinical trials evaluating its AI-09—a novel liquid comprised of a botulinum nanoemulsion, an active botulinum molecule encapsulated in a "nano-sized" droplet of oil for the treatment of glabellar lines. The liquid injectable neuromodulator must undergo additional trials before potentially becoming available to practitioners.

Clockwise from top: Image by Yuliia; rojo; Victor Moussaat at Adobe Stock

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