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The Guide for Excellence in Medical Aesthetics

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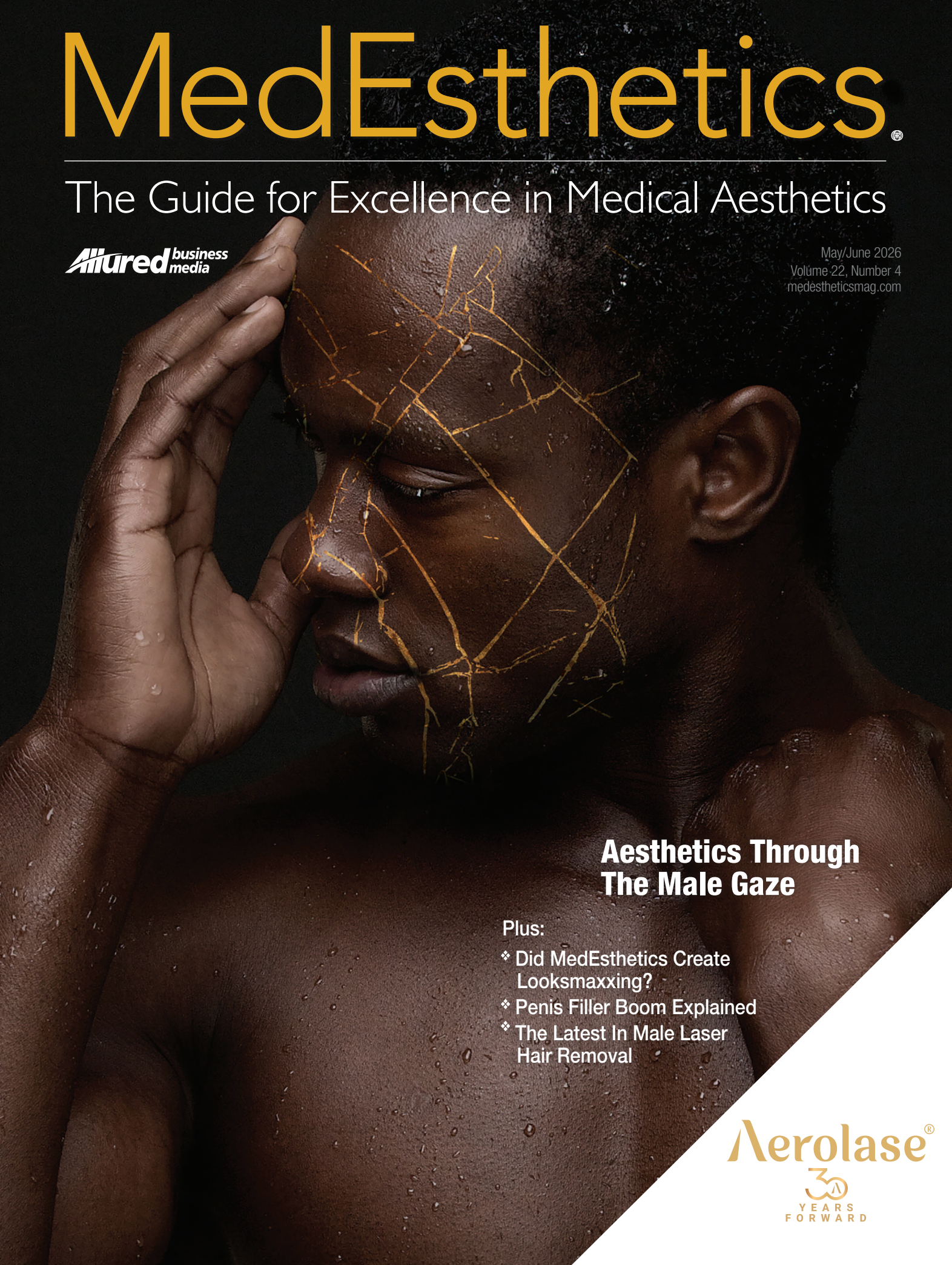

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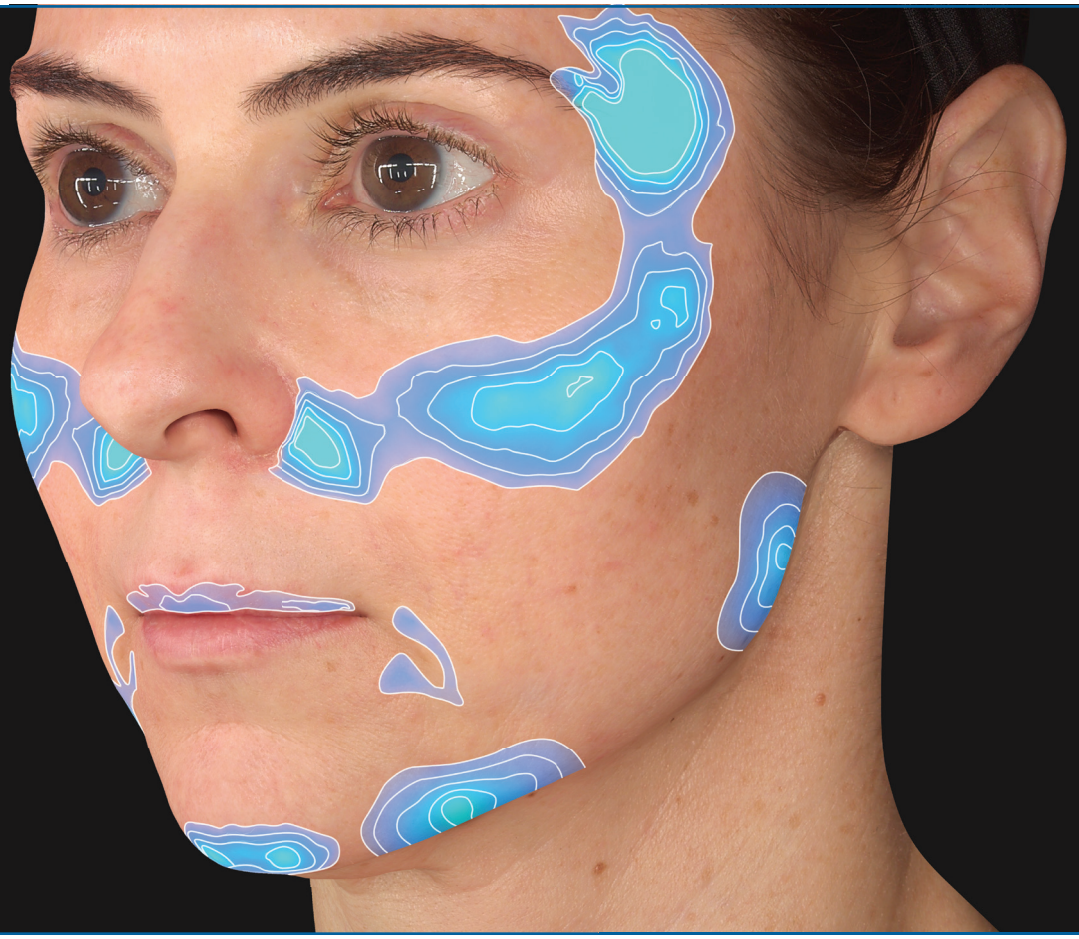



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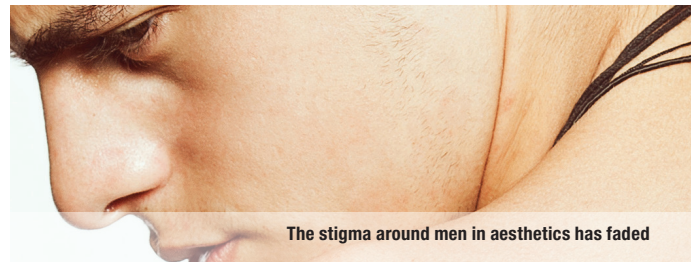
Aesthetics Through The Male Gaze



The stigma around men in aesthetics has faded

Men's entry into medical aesthetics has been on the incline for years. Recent research reveals that men have been turning to aesthetic procedures and clinical skincare products for self-care and anti-aging benefits since as early as 2019[1] while the number of Gen Z and early Millennial men ages 26–34 undergoing aesthetic treatments has increased by 70%[2]. Medspas are also reporting an uptick in procedures such as semaglutide-assisted weight loss, hair restoration, limb lengthening, and more. Similarly, reports[3] indicate that over 400,000 men in the U.S. alone receive botox every year. The trend coincides with the online "looksmaxxing" phenonmenon, which is reshaping how younger male patients think about facial optimization.

In turn, the market has responded. Entire product lines are now dedicated to men's skincare, offering everything from gentle cleansers and antioxidant serums to broad-spectrum SPF, with no signs of slowing down. The trickle-down effect has been significant for the medspa industry: According to Statista, the global male grooming market is projected to reach $115 billion by 2028, up from nearly $80 billion in 2022.[4] Qsight Guidepoint reports that in 2023, men spent an average of $1,678 on non-surgical aesthetics services and products, compared to $1,357 for women. On a per-visit basis, men spent an average of $732, while women spent $524. Overall, the men's skin care market is projected to reach $28.345 billion by 2029, growing at a double-digit CAGR throughout the forecast period, according to a study from Future Market Insights.

This month focuses on these trends in depth. The result: Medical aesthetics through the male gaze. By the end of this issue, you'll be up to date on the latest advancements in men's laser procedures, with insights from the CEOs of industry-leading laser companies. We'll also explore penis fillers, as penile enhancements become increasingly popular among men seeking changes to their sex lives. In addition, this issue examines the chicken-and-egg question of whether men's growing presence in medical aesthetics is fueling the rise of unsafe at-home treatments practiced by young men chasing these increasingly popular aesthetic outcomes.

Men are no longer en route to the landscape of medesthetics; they're arrived. And we'll guide you through the new terrain every step of the way.

Joshua Eferighe

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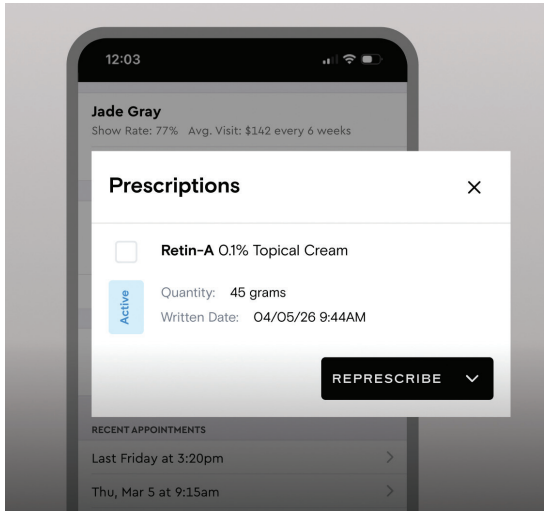
INTRODUCTIONS



On April 9, 2026, **NEOSTRATA** announced it'll be available for dermatology offices nationwide, including it's in-office peels and a full maintenance skincare portfolio. NEOSTRATA, which comes with more than 50 years of clinical credibility being that it was founded by the dermatologists who developed the first glycolic acid skin patent in 1974, has been proven to deliver clinically proven results without the downtime. Some of their key offerings include: Prosystem In-Office Peels, PHA Barrier Recovery Cream and their PHA Facial Cleanser. Providers can explore and purchase products at neostrataprofessional.com, including top-performing retail essentials designed to support in-office treatments.



Boulevard, which is a client experience platform for appointment-based self-care businesses, announced the launch of ePrescribe — a new feature that brings secure electronic prescribing directly into patient profiles on April 14, 2026.

According to the company announcement, ePrescribe enables medspas and other clinical wellness practices to manage prescriptions alongside scheduling, charting, payments, and the broader patient experience within the Boulevard platform, eliminating system switching, reducing duplicate data entry, and minimizing risk of error.



After celebrating its 15th anniversary on April 17 2026, therapeutic LED light therapy company, **BioPhotas, Inc.**, launched The Celluma MYSTIQUE — a new itiration of their award-winning Celluma SERIES of Light Therapy Devices. The device is the first FDA-cleared LED mask indicated for the treatment of acne, facial wrinkles, and hair loss on the scalp all in a single device. The MYSTIQUE is available for pre-orders at Celluma.com,The Company expects to ship U.S. orders by the end of May 2026.

Images courtesy of the manufacturers

Unlock Med Spa Growth:
Credit Intelligence Bridges Affordability Gap

By Max Axler, Executive Vice President, Chief Credit Officer, and expert on Synchrony PRISM, a next-generation proprietary credit decisioning system that broadens the lens through which financial health is assessed

The demand for med spa services is surging as they become increasingly central to how consumers approach longevity, wellness and self-confidence.[1] Yet, despite momentum, cost remains a significant hurdle, impacting both business growth and patient satisfaction. Cost concerns are one of the biggest barriers to initial access and continued treatment.

The data is compelling: 69% of consumers who do not receive consistent med spa services would like to, but over half (59%) indicate costs are the number one barrier.[2] As a result, financial pathways may determine whether consumers begin or continue recommended care, as nearly half (49%) of consumers report needing a down payment before receiving med spa services.[2]

This friction exists even though many practices accept financing options;[3] the core challenges of affordability and sustained access remain unresolved. The key to unlocking this potential lies not just in accepting payments, but in expanding access to credit through more intelligent, holistic financial tools.

From Traditional Credit Scores to Holistic Credit Intelligence

Historically, financing decisions in health and wellness care relied on traditional credit scores. While widely used, these scores may provide a static and incomplete view of consumers' financial realities.

In the context of med spa care – where treatments are elective, ongoing and built on trusted relationships – limitations of a one-dimensional score could unintentionally block care access for consumers who may be capable of managing care costs if they had more ways to pay.[1]

A holistic approach to credit decisioning helps address this gap by incorporating a broader range of financial indicators. By leveraging real-time and alternative data, lenders can develop a more dynamic understanding of consumers' financial behavior and capacity.

The Future of Med Spa Financing

Synchrony PRISM, a next-generation proprietary credit decisioning system, enables this shift toward more holistic credit evaluation. Using advanced analytics, it leverages Synchrony's 140 million customer accounts and combines traditional credit bureau data with alternative data sources such as cash flow patterns, rent payments and merchant-level insights, enhanced by AI and integration with practice systems. This creates a more comprehensive view of creditworthiness; not only does this approach enable informed underwriting decisions but also helps reduce the risk of overextension by identifying financial patterns not visible through traditional scoring models, thus expanding access while supporting responsible lending.

For consumers, this evolution in credit decisioning could translate into improved access to care and ability to stay consistent with recommended treatment. For practices, it could support patient retention, improved engagement and sustainable growth by reducing financial friction in the care experience.

Integrated financing solutions can also deliver critical operational benefits:

- **Streamlined workflows** through practice management system integration
- **Faster payments** that improve cash flow and reduce administrative burden
- **Multi-source financing capabilities** that expand credit access by connecting consumers with responsible lending options

As med spa services continue to play a larger role in how consumers define wellness and self-care, financing is becoming an increasingly integral part of the care experience. Technologies like Synchrony PRISM, combined with financing solutions like the CareCredit credit card, represent an opportunity to shift toward more accessible, sustainable, and patient-centered care models.

By embracing this evolution, med spas can not only meet the growing demand but also solidify their role as trusted partners in consumers' long-term wellness journeys. To learn more about CareCredit visit: www.CareCredit.com.



Max Axler is Synchrony's Chief Credit Officer responsible for credit, fraud, collections, recovery and authentication analytics and strategies deployed across Synchrony's partners and Synchrony's bank, as well as merchant and venture underwriting. Synchrony offers the CareCredit health and wellness credit card. Prior to joining CareCredit, Axler helped lead the IPO of the company from GE. Axler rejoined Synchrony from GE in 2013, where he was CFO of GE's Franchise Finance business. Axler joined GE upon graduating Michigan State University and was part of their Corporate Audit Staff, working in 6 different countries across 8 different GE business models.

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Aesthetic Marketing That Converts

Using Gateway Treatments to Drive Rapid Lead Generation

Your aesthetic medical practice needs more patients to book your highest ROI treatments. So, you turn to paid social media advertising to generate leads, offering package deals and discounts that are priced at $2,000 or more. It sounds like a great idea, but unfortunately, your aesthetic marketing campaign is already set up to fail before you draft the ad copy.

While your big picture goal should be to generate more bookings for high-ROI procedures, this is not the way to attract new leads through social media advertising. Instead, shift your perspective and focus on:

- Lower-cost, entry-level services
- Establishing trust and credibility
- Maximizing opportunities for lifetime value

Through real-world experience working with medical aesthetic practices nationwide, and supported by recent data from NewBeauty, boutique aesthetic marketing agency Total Social Solutions explains why "gateway treatments" are the fastest way to generate new patient leads using social media advertising.

Image by Monster Ztudio at Adobe Stock

Why Gateway Treatments Perform Best on Social Media

Social media users are not actively searching for aesthetic medical services—they are browsing. This makes platform selection critical in aesthetic marketing, as treatment complexity and price point directly affect conversion.

Lower-cost, well-understood services reduce hesitation and encourage action. Neurotoxins, laser hair removal, and hydradermabrasion fit this model because they are familiar, accessible, and aligned with common aesthetic concerns.

From the polling conducted by NewBeauty, the top services that bring in new patients include:

- Neurotoxin (31%)
- Facial/hydradermabrasion (22%)
- Laser treatments (15%)

Body contouring, typically a significant investment, was only 9% of new patient requests.

Why does this happen? Gateway treatments function as a low-risk entry point into your practice, allowing new patients to engage without a significant financial or emotional commitment.

From there, it is up to you to establish trust, educate your new patients, and ultimately convert them to higher-cost services.

Name Recognition Matters

Brand familiarity plays a decisive role in paid social performance. Treatments with established consumer awareness require less education and generate faster decisions.

Recognizable services such as Botox® and HydraFacial benefit from years of exposure through media, friend referrals, and direct-to-consumer marketing. In aesthetic marketing campaigns, this recognition shifts the focus from explaining the treatment to differentiating the provider and the offer.

The result? Lower cost per lead and higher booking rates.

Turning First-Time Aesthetic Consumers Into Long-Term Value Patients

Gateway treatments are not designed to maximize revenue at the first visit—they are designed to start relationships.

Packaging these services into a treatment series increases visit frequency and extends patient engagement. Multiple appointments allow practices to:

- Deliver consistent, high-quality patient experiences
- Build trust and rapport
- Identify evolving aesthetic concerns
- Introduce complementary and higher-ROI treatments at the appropriate time

This progression replaces hard selling with informed, trust-based decision-making.

Using Social Media Ads as a Precision Tool

Highly focused aesthetic marketing campaigns on social media are most effective when promoting 1-3 gateway treatments in a single ad, depending on the offers. One clear promotion consistently outperforms broad messaging.

Platforms such as Facebook and Instagram favor clarity and relevance. Ads that attempt to showcase too many services may dilute impact and increase acquisition costs.

Social media works best as a front-end acquisition channel, not a comprehensive service catalog.

Aligning Aesthetic Marketing Channels With Patient Intent

While social media excels at introducing new patients through gateway treatments, higher-ticket procedures require a different strategy.

If your goal is to drive more leads for energy-based skin tightening, body contouring, or even surgical procedures, switch to Google Ads. Google Search is where patient intent is explicit. When individuals search for a specific treatment or provider, they are actively seeking care and are further along in the decision-making process. Conversion rates are higher.

The most effective aesthetic marketing strategies match treatment type to patient intent, using social media to attract and nurture new patients, and search advertising to capture high-intent demand.

When aligned correctly, this approach drives faster lead generation, stronger patient relationships, and more predictable growth. ME



Jennifer Church Kilkenny owns Total Social Solutions, a digital marketing agency specializing in aesthetic medicine and surgery. Since acquiring the agency in 2013, she has partnered with plastic surgeons, facial plastic surgeons, dermatologists, medical spas, and surgical societies nationwide, helping aesthetic practices grow through social media marketing, web design, SEO, and comprehensive digital strategy. With over a decade of experience in the field, Jennifer is a trusted voice in aesthetic marketing and a regular contributor to ASDS Currents magazine. Learn more at totalsocialsolutions.com.

Image courtesy of the author

HOW MORE MEN ARE DRIVING CHANGE IN LASER HAIR REMOVAL

Aleya Bamdad



How Growing Male Demand Is Changing Laser Hair Removal: Key Takeaways

- More men are choosing laser hair removal to save time and simplify their grooming routines
- Male clients are taking a more intentional approach to grooming, investing in longer-lasting hair removal solutions that fit their lifestyle
- From clearer consultations to tailored treatment plans, laser technicians are turning to outcome-driven care

Globally, the laser hair removal market is forecast to grow from around $1.09 billion in 2023 to around $7.7 billion globally by 2035.

Behind those numbers is a shift that's becoming hard to ignore: more men are entering the market, not as occasional clients, but as engaged clients investing in long-term grooming solutions.

This reflects a broader change in how men approach personal care. Traditional hair removal methods like shaving and waxing are starting to feel less practical, often time-consuming, irritating, and difficult to maintain.

As a result, more men are turning to laser hair removal as a low-maintenance option that fits more easily into their daily lives.

From a practitioner's perspective, this doesn't feel like a passing trend. It's something we're seeing more often in the treatment room, with men looking for solutions that are practical, effective, and longer lasting.

"We've seen a clear rise in male clients who want hair removal solutions that save time



Image by Vadym Huzhva at Adobe Stock



For men, low-maintenance routines comes down to simplicity.

and reduce irritation," said Aleya Bamdad, Founder and CEO of Laser by Aleya. "They are looking for a structured approach that fits into their routine without the ongoing maintenance of shaving or waxing."

In this article, we will:

- Take a closer look at why more men are choosing laser hair removal
- Show how clinics are adjusting to this growing demand
- Explore what this means for the future of laser hair removal for men

What's Driving the Increase in Male Laser Hair Removal?

The rise in male clients is being driven by a mix of practical needs and shifting cultural norms, including:

1. **Efficiency and Low-Maintenance Routines**
   For many men, it comes down to simplicity. There's a growing preference for routines that are easy to maintain without sacrificing results.Laser hair removal offers a long-term solution that reduces the need for constant upkeep, making it especially appealing for busy professionals or those managing larger treatment areas.
2. **Skin Health and Comfort**
   Skin health is another major factor. Repeated shaving often leads to irritation, ingrown hair, and uneven texture, particularly in areas like the neck or back.As awareness of these issues grows, more clients are looking for solutions that improve not just appearance, but overall skin comfort.
3. **The Evolving Standards of Male Grooming**
   There's also a broader cultural shift shaping this demand. While practical factors like time and skin health matter, perceptions of body hair are evolving as well.Features like chest hair have long been associated with masculinity and high levels of testosterone, but what's considered attractive has changed over time.In the 1970s, fuller body hair was widely embraced (encouraged, even), while the 1990s and early 2000s leaned toward a cleaner, more minimal look.The rise of male self-care is reshaping the grooming industry, with more clients viewing professional treatments and long-term solutions as worthwhile lifestyle investments.

How Clinics Are Adjusting to More Male Clients

As more male clients turn to laser hair removal, clinics are seeing a noticeable shift in day-to-day demand and treatment patterns.

It's pushing laser specialists to rethink how the entire process is delivered.

1. Rethinking Consultations and Treatment Planning

More often, the shift shows up before the treatment even begins.

Male clients tend to come in with a different mindset, focusing less on aesthetics alone and more on efficiency and comfort.

That shift is pushing clinics to:

- **Keep consultations straightforward and focused on results**
- **Be upfront about timelines and how results develop over time**
- **Build treatment plans that are efficient, practical, and easy to stick to**

2. Adapting to Male Hair and Treatment Needs

There's also a practical reality that quickly becomes clear.

Male hair is often coarser, denser, and spread across larger areas, which requires adjustments to treatment techniques and session planning.

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To make this work, clinics are:

- **Adjusting techniques to better manage coarse, fast-growing hair**
- **Using FDA-approved laser machines that can efficiently treat larger areas**
- **Focusing on consistency across multiple sessions to maintain results**

3. Shifting the Overall Client Experience

The shift goes beyond the treatment itself and into the overall experience.

Male clients consistently gravitate toward care that is clear and focused on outcomes rather than added complexity.

This can translate to:

- **Creating a space that feels private, professional, and free of judgment**
- **Framing treatments as practical solutions, not just cosmetic upgrades**
- **Prioritizing efficiency and long-term value over quick fixes**

Lessons From Experience: Insights From Aleya

In practice, the shift becomes evident when you start working directly with male clients. From experience, one thing stands out quickly: they tend to approach grooming with a clear purpose.

Many come in with specific goals, often driven by frustration with shaving, recurring irritation, or the time it takes to maintain certain areas.

Rather than looking for quick fixes, they're usually focused on long-term solutions that actually simplify their routine.

That shift has reinforced a few key takeaways:

- Clear expectations early on go a long way: Clients respond best when expectations are clear from the start, including timelines, number of sessions, and how results build over time.
- Keep the process straightforward: Simple, practical consultations tend to resonate more than overly technical explanations or heavy branding.
- Focus on results: What matters most is efficiency, comfort, and outcomes that last.
- Make it easy to maintain: Treatment plans that fit naturally into a client's routine are far more appealing than anything high maintenance.

Clinics that understand this mindset are better positioned to meet the needs of this growing audience.

What's Next for Male Laser Hair Removal?

What we're seeing isn't a temporary spike; it's a steady shift that's beginning to redefine the laser hair removal industry.

1. Continued Growth in Male Clients

Professional grooming is becoming more familiar territory for men, and that shift is only gaining traction.

- **Younger generations are more open to starting treatments earlier**
- **Repeat visits are becoming more common as results develop over time**
- **Word-of-mouth and growing normalization will continue to drive demand**

2. Prioritizing Solutions That Last

At the same time, quick fixes are losing their appeal, as more clients look for options that are easier to manage in the long run.

- **Treatments that reduce long-term upkeep will continue to gain traction**
- **Clients are placing more value on consistency and predictable results**
- **Clinics that focus on long-term outcomes will stay competitive**

3. A More Intentional Client Experience

As the market grows, expectations are becoming more defined. Clients are paying closer attention to how the entire experience feels from start to finish.

- **Offer care that feels more tailored and efficient**
- **Communicate in a more direct, results-focused way**
- **Design an experience that makes treatments easier to fit into everyday life**

Ultimately, these changes point to a more intentional client base.

Male clients aren't just looking for a quick fix anymore. They're now also thinking in terms of long-term routines that fit their lifestyle, from everyday grooming to being ready for the beach without the extra upkeep.

For clinics, that means keeping things practical, transparent, and focused on results. Those that adjust to this mindset will be in a better position to grow with it.



Aleya is the brain behind Laser by Aleya, where everything is centered on helping you feel comfortable and confident in your skin through safe, effective laser hair removal and electrolysis. With over 20 years of hands-on experience, that expertise shows up in how every treatment is customized, how your skin is cared for, and how honest the process feels from your very first visit.





Image courtesy of the author

AESTHETICS IS WELLNESS NOW. THE INDUSTRY NEEDS TO CATCH UP.

By Clint Weiler, CEO, Milan Laser Hair Removal

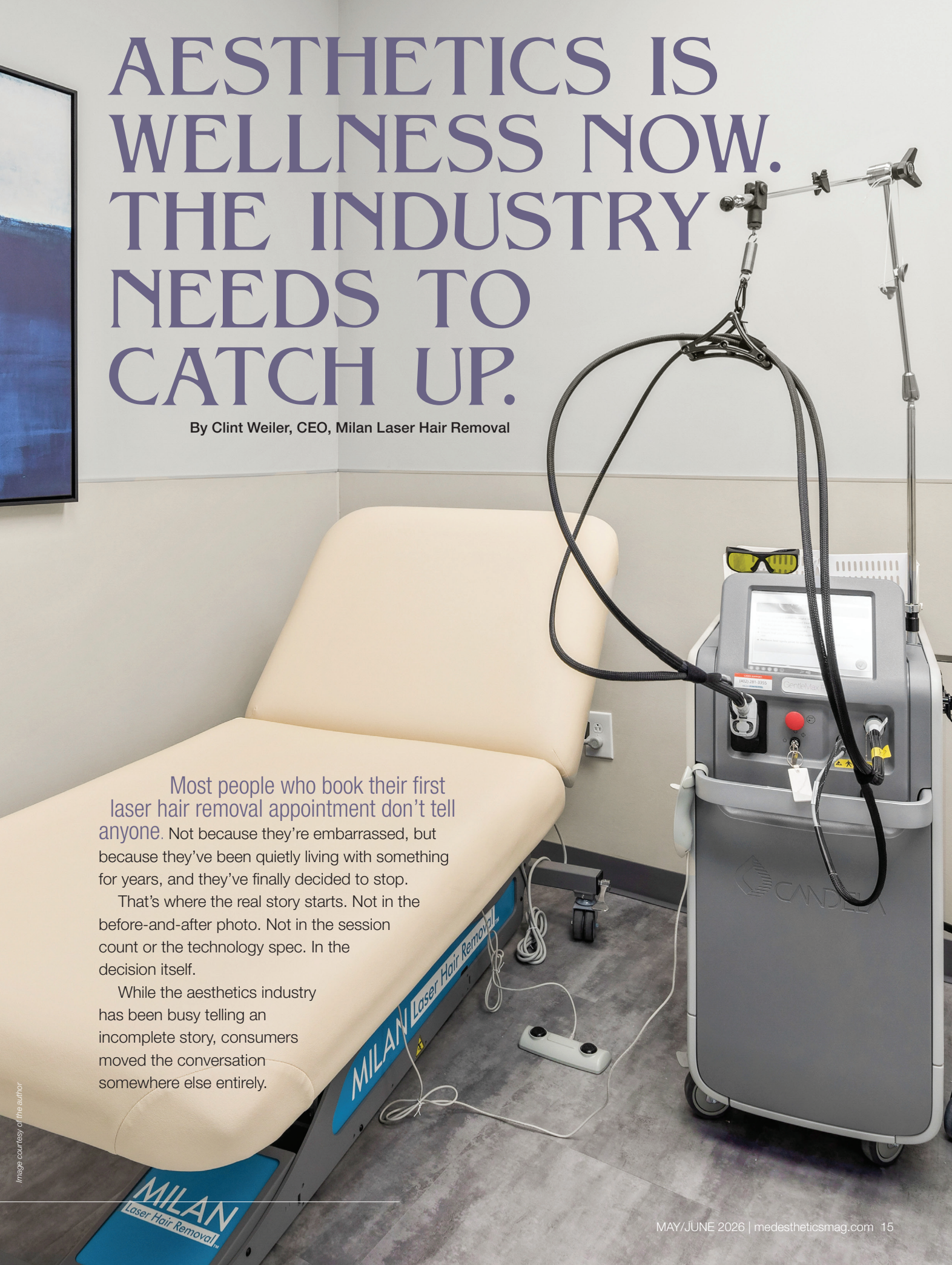

Image courtesy of the author

Most people who book their first laser hair removal appointment don't tell anyone. Not because they're embarrassed, but because they've been quietly living with something for years, and they've finally decided to stop.

That's where the real story starts. Not in the before-and-after photo. Not in the session count or the technology spec. In the decision itself.

While the aesthetics industry has been busy telling an incomplete story, consumers moved the conversation somewhere else entirely.



Most operators in aesthetics built models where client success and business success exist in tension.

The aesthetics industry has a storytelling problem. For years, it has led with before-and-after photos, session counts, and technology specs. None of it captures what actually happens when someone decides to invest in themselves, permanently. And while the industry has been busy telling that incomplete story, consumers moved the conversation somewhere else entirely.

They moved it into wellness. Not because anyone in aesthetics declared it, but because they experienced it and drew their own conclusions. The wellness economy runs on a simple premise: investing in how you feel day-to-day is worth prioritizing, not as a luxury indulgence, but as a legitimate allocation of time, money, and attention toward quality of life. The ROI is lived, not clinical. Consumers already apply that logic to their sleep, their nutrition, and their mental and physical fitness. Laser hair removal belongs there structurally because of what it actually delivers.

What laser hair removal delivers is the permanent elimination of a recurring friction. Every other solution in the category manages the problem. Laser hair removal ends it. That distinction matters more than the industry has been willing to acknowledge, because ending something produces a fundamentally different response than managing it ever could. The technology that makes that possible, dual-wavelength systems like the Candela GentleMax Pro, designed to safely and effectively treat every skin tone and hair type, means the permanent outcome isn't a promise reserved for a narrow slice of the population. It's available to everyone, and it's why we use it in every Milan Laser clinic. What clients describe on the other side isn't a result. It's a shift in how they move through their days. The morning they stopped calculating whether they'd shaved close enough before a workout. The trip they booked without scheduling around a waxing appointment. The moment they caught themselves reaching for an anxiety that no longer existed, and noticed its absence.

The outcome clients describe most consistently isn't smoother skin. It's confidence. Not the kind that comes from a compliment or a good photo. The kind that comes from no longer negotiating with something that used to take up space every single day. Most people don't realize how much mental space hair removal consumes until it's gone, the planning, the self-consciousness, the routine that never actually resolves. What I keep coming back to, after watching this play out across hundreds of thousands of clients in our 400+ clinics, is how consistently people describe not just feeling better, but reclaiming something. Time. Mental space. The freedom to show up in their lives without thinking twice. When more than 150,000 of those clients put it into words unprompted, they aren't simply writing

Image courtesy of the author



Image courtesy of the author

about smooth skin. They're writing about something that changed. That pattern, at that scale, stops being anecdotal. It becomes a signal the industry should be taking seriously.

The gap between what someone came in for and what they walked away with is exactly where the category-level opportunity lives. And most of the industry is missing it. Not because the outcomes aren't real, but because the business models aren't built to deliver them. The session-based model the industry runs on has a structural problem: it makes money when the problem persists. The risk lands entirely on the client. The financial incentive points toward extending the timeline, not ending it. That isn't a wellness model. It's a maintenance model, and in a category whose consumers have graduated to expecting permanent solutions, that misalignment is becoming harder to ignore.

The operators who will define the next chapter of this category are the ones who understand that client outcomes and business outcomes don't have to pull against each other. They can be the same thing. That's the bet Milan Laser's founders made when they built the Unlimited Package™. The Unlimited Package™ means one price, unlimited treatments, and a lifetime guarantee, because a solution that can't account for hormonal and age-related changes isn't actually solving the problem. It was built around a simple belief: getting a client to a permanent result as efficiently as possible is better for them, and it turns out it's better for the business too. A client who reaches the outcome they came for doesn't just leave satisfied. They become the most credible, lowest-cost, highest-converting marketing a brand has. That flywheel doesn't exist in a session-based model. The incentive structure won't allow it. What I've seen, at the scale we operate, is that building around permanent outcomes rather than managed maintenance isn't a tradeoff between doing right by the client and running a healthy business. It's the same decision.

The broader implication for the category is significant. Most operators in aesthetics built models where client success and business success exist in tension. The wellness economy, more than any other consumer market, punishes that misalignment. Consumers in this space have developed a sharp instinct for distinguishing between brands genuinely invested in their outcome and brands invested in their continued spend. Permanent results are credible in a way managed maintenance never quite is. And credibility, at scale, is what turns clients into advocates and advocates into the kind of growth that compounds.

The shift is already underway. Aesthetics has been earning its place in the wellness economy not because the industry positioned it there, but because clients decided it belonged there and acted accordingly. The more interesting question now isn't whether laser hair removal belongs in wellness. It's whether the industry is willing to build like it does. The operators who figure that out earliest won't just be better positioned; they'll be the ones who define what this category becomes next. That standard already exists. The category has already moved. The only thing left is to decide which side of that line you're on. ME



Clint Weiler is the CEO of Milan Laser Hair Removal, the largest laser hair removal provider in the United States and the only national brand exclusively dedicated to the category. With 400+ clinics across 38 states, 450,000+ clients treated, a 4.9-star rating across more than 150,000 reviews, and 90,000+ treatments performed every month, Milan Laser has defined the standard for permanent hair removal in America.



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WHAT THE BOOM IN PENIS FILLER IS REALLY TEACHING US

—AND WHY GETTING IT RIGHT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

Chris Bustamante

Penis filler is booming, but so are botched results. One expert breaks down what's going wrong—and how providers must evolve.

Growth Is Real—So Is the Gap It's Exposing

The surge in interest around penis filler reflects something larger: men are engaging with aesthetic medicine in ways they never have before. They're more informed, more willing to invest in their appearance and sexual confidence, and more comfortable seeking out treatment.



Image courtesy of the author





Chris Bustamante breaks down what's going wrong—and how providers must evolve.

For clinicians, that demand represents opportunity, but it also introduces risk for patients.

As more practitioners add penis filler to their service offerings, a gap is forming between demand and true clinical preparedness. Unlike the face, the penis has not been the frontliner of aesthetic medicine. Therefore, approaches, techniques, and product selection are not universally decided on. This all comes down to how often the clinician performs the procedure and their devotion to the evolution of the craft. Penile filler is often perceived as straightforward, but in practice it is highly technique-dependent. There is real strategic artistry and filler placement that can make the difference between an aesthetically appealing result and one that not only leaves patients disappointed with the look but also negatively affects their performance and sensation.

My recommendation to anyone seeking male enhancement procedures is to see a provider who is truly an expert in these treatments. At Lushful Aesthetics, roughly 60% of our patients come in for GirthFill™ and ScroFill®, my proprietary Penis Filler and Scrotum Filler treatments. I've perfected these procedures because I execute them every day. Many providers list these services, but perform them infrequently, which can limit experience with both technique and complex post-care management. Suboptimal results from the first experience can really turn off patients to these procedures as a whole.

Revision Work as a Window Into Industry-Wide Shortcomings

Approximately one-third of new GirthFill cases are corrective treatments. That's not an insignificant number, that's a signal of the widening expertise gap within the penile filler category.

The issues vary, but patterns are consistent. Overfilling without regard for proportion. Poor product placement leading to irregular contouring. Inadequate understanding of tissue planes. Failure to account for how the product behaves over time, particularly in a dynamic anatomical area.

In many cases, the root cause isn't negligence, it's underestimation or limited procedural experience.

The procedure can appear deceptively simple. When it is approached that way, outcomes often suffer. For patients there's the disappointment of having spent thousands of

Images courtesy of the author

dollars to have to dissolve their Penis Filler and start from scratch. It's a massive waste of resources, time, and effort on the patient's end.

More Than Just Another Filler Treatment

On the surface, penis filler may appear to be an extension of familiar injectable work. But clinically, it operates in a very different context.

The anatomy is distinct. The functional considerations are different. The margin for error is significantly smaller.

Product selection alone requires nuance, balancing viscosity, cohesive properties, stretch factor, integration, and longevity in a way that aligns with both aesthetic goals and physiological realities. Injection techniques must account for vascular structures, tissue density, and movement. Even small deviations can produce visible irregularities or compromise outcomes.

In revision cases, common patterns emerge: suboptimal product placement, poor choice of needle versus cannula usage, uneven distribution, or technique that does not account for natural contour. These outcomes are not always the result of negligence, but rather a reflection of how technically demanding the procedure truly is.

Unlike many areas of the face, where minor imperfections may go unnoticed or be easily adjusted, outcomes here are far less forgiving. Achieving a result that appears natural, proportionate, and consistent requires deliberate shaping, not simply volume.

This is not a procedure where general filler experience alone produces consistent outcomes. It requires dedicated training, repetition, and a deep understanding of the anatomy being treated.

Patient Selection and the Consultation That Sets Everything Up

If technique determines execution, consultation determines everything that comes before it.

Not every patient is an ideal candidate, and recognizing that is a critical part of achieving good outcomes. Baseline anatomy, skin quality, expectations, and prior treatment history all play a role.

While anatomical factors are readily assessed, expectation management is often the more critical variable. Understanding if the patient's expectations are realistic and whether they are prepared for the downtime and upkeep is really important to uncover.

Patients are educated on what the procedure can and cannot achieve. I walk them through realistic outcomes, not idealized ones. Risks are discussed. Timelines are clarified. And perhaps most importantly, expectations are calibrated.

A lot of the work happens before we ever pick up a syringe and if you don't get the consultation right, you're setting yourself up for problems no matter how good your technique is.

The Standards the Industry Now Needs

As the category grows, the question is no longer whether providers will offer penis filler, but how well they are prepared to do so. At present, standards remain inconsistent.



A gap is forming between demand and true clinical preparedness.

Image by Khunatom at Adobe Stock



Approximately one-third of new GirthFill cases are corrective treatments.

Training pathways vary widely, and protocols are often self-developed. While many practitioners approach the procedure responsibly, the absence of uniform expectations creates variability that can directly impact patient outcomes. In some cases, training is bundled with marketing systems that may not fully prepare providers for the clinical complexity involved.

A growing number of revision patients present after being treated by providers affiliated with such platforms. These programs often promote standardized protocols and showcase before-and-after results that suggest consistency. In practice, however, outcomes can vary significantly when experience and procedural volume are limited. The accessibility of these systems—offering branding, product sourcing, and introductory training—can create a perception of expertise that isn't always matched by clinical repetition or depth of anatomical understanding.

For patients, this disconnect can lead to disappointing results and, in some cases, the need for corrective treatment. More broadly, it highlights a structural issue within the category: when perceived credibility is driven by branding rather than experience, the risk of suboptimal outcomes increases.

Provider selection further complicates the landscape. Patients often ask whether they should seek out a Dermatologist, Plastic Surgeon, Nurse Practitioner, Physician Associate, or Urologist. The reality is that none of these specialties are formally trained in penile filler during standard academic or clinical education. Expertise in this area is developed through focused practice, procedural volume, and ongoing refinement of technique.

In a procedure this specialized consistent case volume is not optional—it is foundational to achieving predictable outcomes. Providers should be able to demonstrate this experience through a comprehensive portfolio that reflects a range of anatomies, starting points, and results. Without that transparency, patients are left to rely on signals that may not accurately reflect clinical capability.

If the industry does not take an active role in defining these standards, they will inevitably be shaped in response to adverse outcomes. By that point, the cost is borne not only by patients, but by the credibility of the category as a whole.

What Sustainable Growth Actually Looks Like

For Lushful Aesthetics, growth in this category hasn't come from rapid expansion or trend-chasing. It has come from consistency.

Enhancement services accounted for 72% of our practice's 2025 revenue, with patient acquisition up 43% and continued year-over-year growth driven largely by referrals and repeat patients.

Since 2023, the business has nearly doubled, with a 54% increase in revenue from enhancement services alone.

But those numbers are a byproduct, not the strategy. In this space, you don't build longevity by being early. You build it by being right. I've invested significant time and effort into patient education on social media and our website. Regularly expanding and updating our portfolio

Image by AnLawKa at Adobe Stock

of before and after images, and establishing the difference between my signature GirthFill™ technique compared to the various Penis Filler treatments that are being offered by other providers.

The Bottom Line

Penis filler is no longer a fringe offering. It is a rapidly expanding category within aesthetic medicine, with demand that shows no signs of slowing.

But growth alone isn't the story.

What this moment is revealing through revision rates, patient experiences, and variability in outcomes is that the industry is still catching up to the clinical realities of the procedure itself.

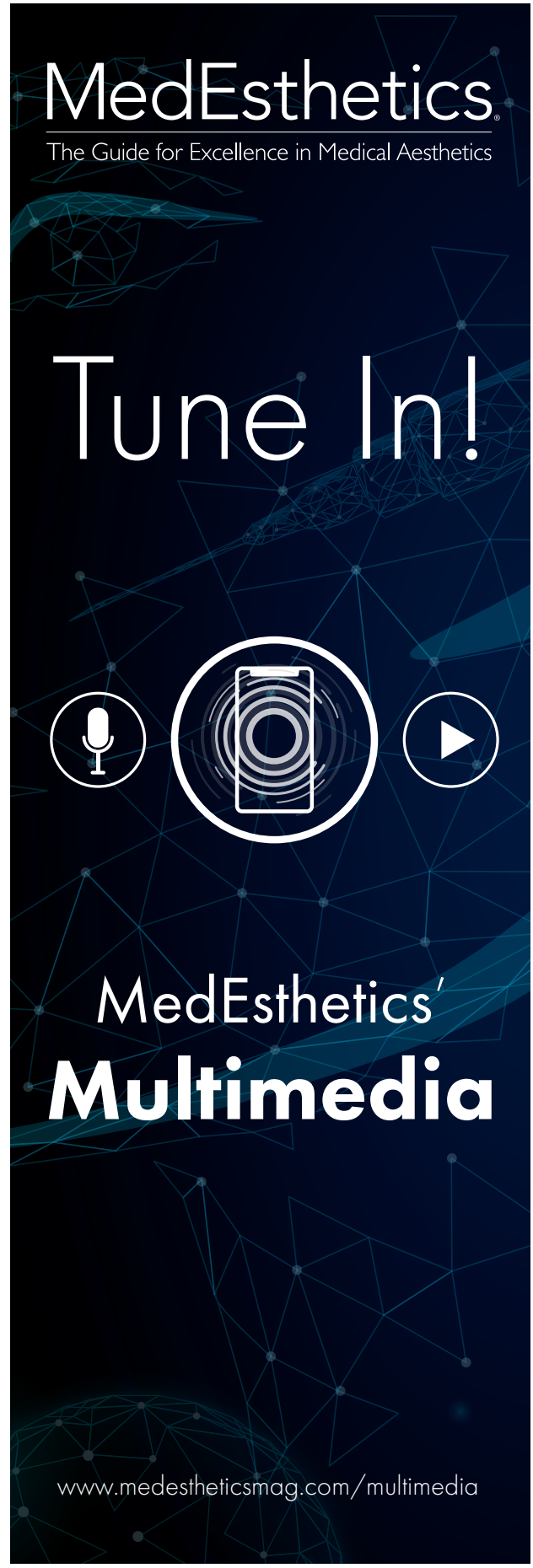
For providers, the takeaway is straightforward. This is not a trend to capitalize on casually. It is a procedure that demands precision, education, and a level of clinical rigor that matches its complexity.

In a category defined by growth, the real differentiator won't be who offers the procedure, it will be who develops the discipline to do it consistently well. ME



Chris Bustamante, DNP, NP-C, is an Aesthetic Nurse Practitioner who earned his Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Columbia University. He specializes in a range of aesthetic treatments including the Lushful Instant BBL, facial fillers, Botox, penis filler, ScroFill®, HoleTox®, laser resurfacing, chemical peels, laser hair removal, RF microneedling, and more.
Known professionally as "InjectorChris," he is a dedicated practitioner who stays at the forefront of the aesthetics field, regularly attending advanced trainings and industry conferences. Prior to his career in medicine, Chris worked as a makeup artist with MAC Cosmetics, where he developed a keen eye for detail, facial proportions, and individualized beauty. He has since built a strong following by sharing informative and engaging content that educates audiences on aesthetic procedures—particularly within men's aesthetics—and offers transparency into the treatment process.
Chris Bustamante is widely recognized in the media, with major features highlighting his expertise in penis filler treatments. He has been featured in The Cut, The New York Post, The Daily Mail, AskMen, HuffPost, and Beauty Independent for his work in male sexual enhancement. Patients travel from around the world to his New York City practice to seek his services, drawn by his extensive portfolio and results-driven approach.
Combining clinical expertise with a passion for aesthetics, InjectorChris delivers comprehensive, top-to-bottom treatments designed to help patients feel more confident in their app

Image courtesy of the author





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LOOKSMAXXING AND THE MALE AESTHETIC REVOLUTION:

What the Industry Must Know About the Generation Reshaping Men's Cosmetic Medicine

By Dr. Michael Sistare, D.O.



Something has shifted in my exam room. The men walking through my doors are younger, better informed, and more specific about what they want. They reference canthal tilt. They mention jawline projection and midface harmony. They've done their research, though not always through the right channels. Many of them have come of age inside the world of looksmaxxing, and whether we in aesthetic medicine acknowledge it or not, this movement is reshaping who our patients are and why they're coming to see us.

As cosmetic surgeons and aesthetic practitioners, we have a professional responsibility to understand looksmaxxing not as a curiosity but as a clinical context. It carries real opportunity and real risk in equal measure.



Looksmaxxing describes the systematic pursuit of maximizing physical attractiveness

What is Looksmaxxing, and why does it matter to our field?

Looksmaxxing describes the systematic pursuit of maximizing physical attractiveness, originating in male-oriented internet forums in the early 2010s before migrating to TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube, where it now commands billions of views. The movement divides into two broad camps: "softmaxxing," which encompasses benign habits like skincare, fitness, grooming, and improved posture, and "hardmaxxing," which extends into medical-grade and surgical interventions, including rhinoplasty, jaw implants, blepharoplasty, dermal fillers, and, in more extreme corners of online culture, dangerous DIY practices like "bonesmashing."

What makes this clinically relevant is scale. The hashtag #looksmax has accumulated over 4.6 billion views on TikTok alone. Peer-reviewed research published in 2025 in the journal Facial Plastic Surgery & Aesthetic Medicine confirms what many of us are already observing in practice: there has been a 30–40% rise in young men seeking aesthetic procedures, with 95% of facial plastic surgeons now reporting male patients, up from 92% the year prior. These aren't abstract statistics; however, they are the young men in our waiting rooms.

Across the broader market, the numbers reinforce the trend. Male cosmetic procedures have increased by approximately 325% since 2000, and the global male aesthetics market reached $5.9 billion in 2024. Market analysts project that figure could double within a decade. This is not a fringe phenomenon but a forecast of our field's future.

The case for taking male aesthetics seriously

The de-stigmatization of cosmetic medicine among men is, in many respects, a positive cultural development. For decades, men experiencing real distress over their appearance had nowhere to turn. There was no cultural permission to seek help, no community of peers who acknowledged those concerns as valid. Women have long had robust ecosystems of conversation around body image, self-care, and aesthetic enhancement. Men, by contrast, have historically faced ridicule for voicing similar concerns.

Looksmaxxing, at its most constructive, fills part of that gap. Softmaxxing in particular encourages men to build consistent skincare habits, prioritize fitness, dress intentionally, and address dental and grooming hygiene. These are recommendations that align well with the kind of foundational advice any good physician would offer. When a 24-year-old man comes to my office after spending six months improving his skin, losing weight, and now wanting to address residual submental fullness or under-eye hollowing, that is a patient with reasonable goals and a healthy relationship to self-improvement. Those consultations are among the most gratifying in my practice.

There is also something worth acknowledging about autonomy. Men seeking cosmetic enhancement are not, as a category, suffering from pathology. Many are motivated by professional confidence, social ease, or simply a desire to feel that their exterior matches their interior. Those motivations are legitimate, and this field exists to serve them thoughtfully.

The risks we cannot ignore

And yet, the same cultural machinery that destigmatizes male aesthetics also generates serious clinical hazards that practitioners must be prepared to navigate.

The most pressing is the relationship between looksmaxxing communities and body dysmorphic disorder.

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BDD affects approximately 40% of cosmetic surgery-seeking patients in some estimates, and heavy social media engagement is associated with BDD prevalence roughly twice that of the general population. Research published in 2025 documented that in every single rating thread analyzed across looksmaxxing forums, users were insulted, unfavorably compared to other men, or encouraged to harm themselves. These are not communities built around healthy self-improvement. In their most extreme iterations, they are degradation systems dressed up in the language of optimization.

The clinical implication is direct: a meaningful subset of the young men arriving in aesthetic medicine consultations are not seeking enhancement from a stable foundation. They are seeking relief from an obsessive cycle, and surgery, in those cases, does not provide it. Research consistently shows that patients with untreated BDD who undergo cosmetic procedures experience no improvement in their psychological distress or, in many cases, a worsening. Operating on these patients does not help them. It fails them.

Beyond BDD, the looksmaxxing ecosystem promotes a range of practices that run from pseudoscientific to genuinely dangerous. “Bonesmashing” involves intentionally striking the jaw to supposedly stimulate bone remodeling, and it has migrated from online hoax to attempted practice. SARMs, unregulated peptides, and synthetic hormones marketed as appearance-enhancing drugs are being sourced from unregulated online retailers and self-administered without any physician oversight. “Mewing,” the practice of forcibly pressing the tongue against the palate to reshape the jaw structure, is widespread despite a lack of meaningful clinical evidence. These trends result in patients presenting with real injuries and unrealistic expectations shaped by sources with no medical accountability.

What practitioners need to know before treating these patients

The rise of looksmaxxing does not change the fundamentals of good cosmetic medicine. It raises the stakes for applying them. Here is what I believe every practitioner serving male aesthetic patients should hold as non-negotiable:

Screen rigorously for BDD and unhealthy motivation. A patient who presents having exhaustively researched specific measurements, who references canthal tilt angles, who has a list of numbered interventions he believes are “required,” and who describes his appearance using the rating language of online forums warrants a careful, unhurried consultation. This is not a consultation to rush. Ask open-ended questions about the outcomes the patient hopes for in his life, not just in his face. Understanding whether enhancement is meant to complement a generally functional self-image or to rescue one that is in crisis is the most important clinical judgment you will make.

Reject the surgical menu model. The looksmaxxing community encourages men to approach aesthetic

Male cosmetic procedures have increased by approximately 325% since 2000



Image by Vasyl; New Africa at Adobe Stock

intervention as a checklist: chin implant, rhinoplasty, blepharoplasty, jaw contouring, all in sequence. Our role is not to execute a list. It is to evaluate whether each intervention is appropriate for that patient's anatomy, goals, and psychological readiness. A patient who has been told by an online community that he "needs" a jaw implant is not automatically a candidate for one. He is a candidate for a thorough consultation in which we assess his facial harmony, discuss realistic outcomes, and determine whether his goals are achievable and appropriate.

Counsel patients on the misinformation landscape. Many young men arrive in consultation rooms having absorbed significant misinformation from looksmaxxing influencers who have no clinical training. Part of our job is gentle, non-judgmental education: explaining what evidence actually supports, what mewing cannot accomplish, what filler can and cannot do for bone structure, and what recovery timelines actually look like. Patients who have been operating in information environments that prioritize ideological certainty over scientific evidence may be skeptical of nuance. That is worth anticipating.

Build referral relationships with mental health professionals. For patients where BDD, body image distress, or obsessive patterns appear to be driving their consultation, having an established relationship with a psychiatrist or psychologist who understands the intersection of cosmetic medicine and mental health is part of delivering responsible care. Operating on a patient in a psychological crisis and calling it a service to that patient is something this field cannot afford.

Know when to decline. This is perhaps the most important and most underemphasized point. Declining to operate on a patient who is not an appropriate surgical candidate is not a failure of patient care. It is patient care. The pressure to convert consultations into procedures is real, particularly in competitive markets. Resisting it, when resistance is clinically indicated, is what separates ethical practitioners from those who exploit the vulnerability this trend occasionally creates.

An opportunity we should not squander

I want to be careful not to reduce looksmaxxing to its pathological edge. The broader male aesthetic awakening that this movement represents is largely a positive development. It reflects a growing willingness among men to invest in their appearance, engage with skincare, seek professional consultation, and discuss body image concerns openly. Men deserve the same access to thoughtful aesthetic care that has long been available to women, and the growing male patient population gives this field an extraordinary opportunity to serve a historically underserved group.

The question is whether we will meet that opportunity with the clinical rigor it deserves. The looksmaxxing generation is arriving with high expectations and, in many cases, a significant need for guidance from credentialed professionals rather than anonymous online forums. Our value as board-certified practitioners who understand anatomy, surgical risk, psychological nuance, and long-term outcomes has never been more relevant.

What this moment requires of us is both openness and vigilance: openness to a new generation of male patients whose motivations and cultural context differ from those of prior decades, and vigilance about the clinical red flags that the looksmaxxing ecosystem can generate. We should welcome these patients into our practices. We should treat them with the same care, honesty, and individualization we bring to every consultation. And we should never let the volume of demand become an excuse for shortcuts in judgment.

The mirror that looksmaxxing holds up is not ours to manage. But the care we provide when men step away from it very much is. ME



Dr. Michael Sistare was raised in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and graduated from Saint Thomas Aquinas High School. He earned Bachelor's Degrees from both Florida State University and Florida International University on his path to medical school. He graduated from Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine-Bradenton Campus before continuing his general surgery residency at Larkin Community Hospital in South Miami, Florida.

He learned the art of cosmetic surgery from Dr. Eric Nuveen at Cosmetic Surgery Affiliates in Oklahoma City as a surgical fellow. After fellowship, Dr. Sistare was fortunate to be able to move back to South Florida to start practice at Palm Beach Cosmetic Surgery.

Dr. Sistare chose a career in cosmetic surgery because it allows him to blend artistry with science, helping patients feel more confident and comfortable in their own skin. This field offers him the unique privilege of forming personal connections with patients, listening to their stories, and understanding their goals. Caring and detail-oriented, he takes pride in crafting personalized treatment plans that align with each patient's vision, always striving for natural, harmonious results. Driven by compassion and a commitment to excellence, his work is about more than enhancing appearances—it's about empowering patients and positively impacting their lives.

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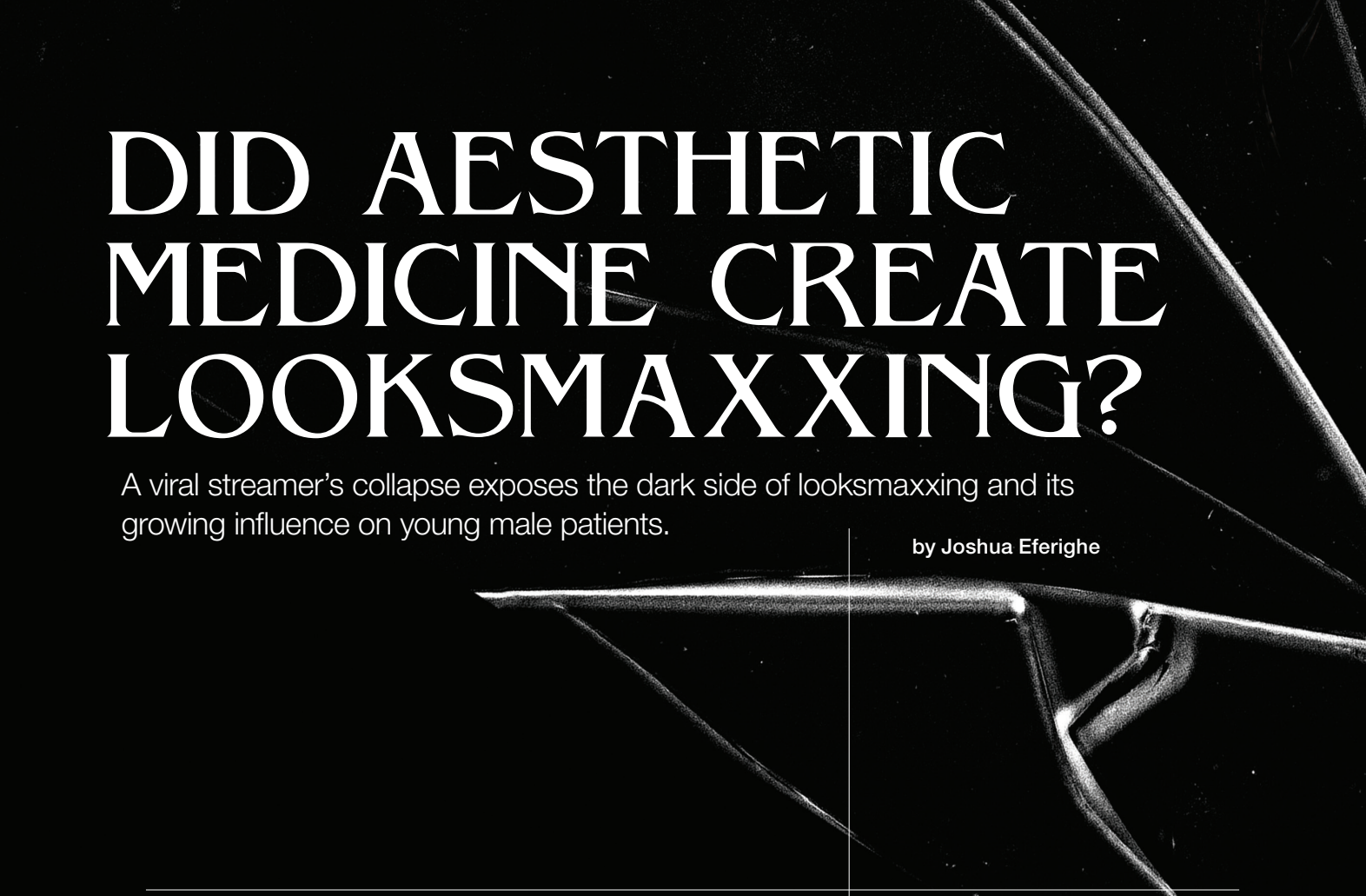
DID AESTHETIC MEDICINE CREATE LOOKSMAXXING?

A viral streamer's collapse exposes the dark side of looksmaxxing and its growing influence on young male patients.

by Joshua Eferighe



On April 14, 2026, 20-year-old viral streamer and social media influencer, "Clavicular", was carried out of a Miami mall and hospitalized after appearing incoherent while filming content for his thousands of subscribers.

It was later reported that Miami Fire officials were responding to a suspected overdose.

"Just got home, that was brutal," Clavivular said in a social media post. "All of the substances are just a cope trying to feel neurotypical while being in public, but obviously that isn't a real solution. The worst part of tonight was my face descending from the life support mask."

Born Braden Eric Peters, Clavicular is the face behind the viral "looksmaxxing" (maximizing physical attractiveness) trend that has taken gen-z males by storm. The word has now mophed into a movement and lifestyle, which consists of aesthetic hacks and promoting extreme looksmaxxing regimens. According to Clavicular, the routines are how he's been able to achieve his 31-inch waist and sharp clavicles that span 19.5 inches (his own measurements, provided to the New York Times) and people believe him.

While he's only been filming a little over a year, Clavicular and his looksmaxxing trend has transformed into a movement that has not only permeated the manosphere, but popular culture at large. According to data posted to X, 70,000 clips of Clavicular's content have been viewed 2.2 billion times across short-form video platforms like TikTok and Instagram Reels between March and April alone. And on TikTok, videos with the hashtag #looksmax has gained over 4.6 billion views, influencing young men around the world at alarming rates.

Officials have not specified what substance Clavivluar may or may not have taken before his collapse, but he's been vocal about his experimentation with chemicals, from taking meth to stay thin and starting testosterone therapy at 14, to consuming supplements on the daily to remain chiseled and focused. He's even been open about his interest in unprescribed substances like peptides, lipodissolve, illegal steroids and has been accused of injecting his livestream guests with substances like aqualyx, which is used to reduce fat in the chin, thighs, or stomach. Some of the recommended regimens he promotes, for example, can be anything from encouraging followers to eat "boy kibble" — a recipe comprised nothing more than ground beef and rice for the purpose of low calories and high protein for "gains" — to telling his followers facial bone smashng bone smashing with a hammer is the best way to get a chiseled jawline.

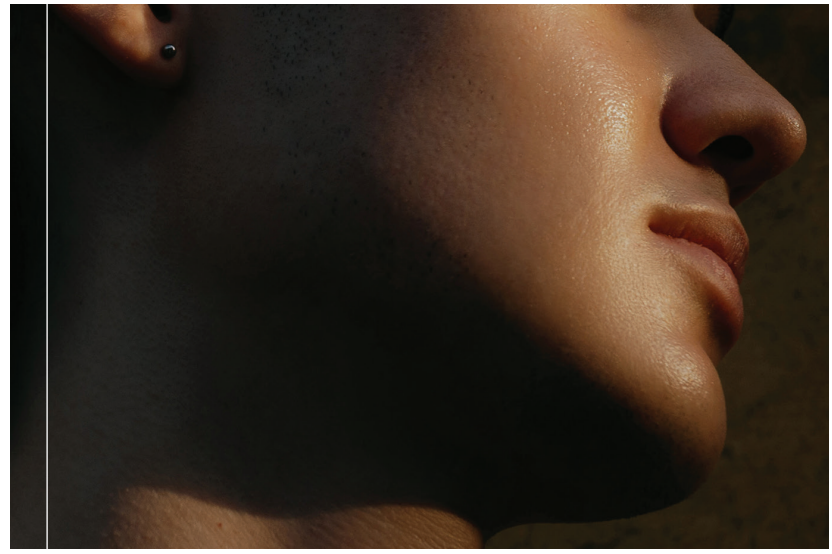
Appearance optimization is a

Images by Yakobchuk Olena; Grenar at Adobe Stock



Image by xxxtof/Adobe Stock

staple of medical aesthetics and has been around long before Claviclar's dangerous rendition of the practice. Non-surgical, tailored procedures, like injectables, laser therapies, and skin tightening have not only been years in development, but are continuing to rise in popularity, especially for men. According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, 1.4 million male cosmetic procedures were conducted last year. The number of males who have had Botox injections has also increased by more than 250% from 2000 till today.



The number of males who have had Botox injections has increased by more than 250% since 2000.

While Clavicular invented looksmaxxing, his platform and message exposes a dangerous homogenation of internet-fueled body obsession and a booming aesthetics market now seeing younger, more impressionable male clients. After talking to experts in the industry, MedEsthetics explores how medspas and practitioners are reckoning with that influence, where ethical boundaries are being tested, and what happens when clinical care meets algorithm-driven extremes.

Medical Aesthetics Role in Looksmaxxing

Aesthetic medicine didn't create looksmaxxing but it did lay the groundwork. From the normalization of injectables in the 1990s and the filler boom of early 2000s, to the emergence of social media and the influence of filters in 2010 and where society is currently with the male aesthetics surge, Clavicular, ultimately, is a byproduct of what has been a periodical shift for men and how they see themselves. Now, in the 2020s, as male demand rises, online communities are taking those benchmarks and stripping them of medical context, turning clinical outcomes into unrealistic optimization projects.

Dr. Diana Ponsky is a renowned double-board certified facial plastic surgeon in Cleveland, Oh. When asked about the medical aesthetics role in the looksmaxxing movement, she admits that the industry is to partially blame. "I don't know for certain, but I'm sure we contributed to some degree. We don't invent beauty ideals or bring on trends—it's the celebrities who bring on trends—but we do standardize them and amplify them. What social media did was turn these into checklists and create an audience where people think that is how they are supposed to look," she says. Dr. Ponsky goes on to say, however, that the trend is not a true representation of medical aesthetics, but a distortion.

"They both influence each other. It's like the chicken and the egg. People come in with online looks or online ideas, and the industry helps to promote that. They both chase each other around. Real esthetics is more about facial balancing and restraint. Looksmaxxing pushes extremes" Dr. Ponsky continued.

How Looksmaxxing Is Changing Male Patient Consultations

One major distortion variance is intent. Looksmaxxing, while touted as a means of self-improvement, functions as a highly prescriptive approach to wellness and self-care that involves constant comparison to other men. Looksmaxxers often assign "looks scores," and host "outmog" competitions that consists of who looks hotter in side-by-side appearances. Physicians across specialties are witnessing the ripple effects of Clavicular's influence.

"Looksmaxxing can raise the pressure to look sharper, younger, or more masculine in very specific ways," says Dr. Sanjai Thankachen, a Medical Director at New Leaf Detox. "We commonly see that online trends can make normal features feel like flaws. For some male patients, issues like anxiety, low self-esteem, or social comparison are driving these trends. Social comparison means measuring yourself against other people. That can push patients to seek fast fixes before they have realistic expectations," he continued.

As a result, the types of patients coming into consultation have recently looked different across offices all over. "The patient has changed. Five years ago, men came in asking to look rested. Now they come in asking

Image by Mirrorstudio at Adobe Stock



Looksmaxxers often assign "looks scores," and host "outmog" competitions

for a specific canthal tilt, a specific gonial angle, and a hunter eye," Dr. Frank Agullo, a double board-certified plastic surgen, tells MedEsthetics. "Requests from looksmaxxing patients cluster together, typically chin and jaw implants, genioplasty, buccal fat removal, rhinoplasty that has been narrowed, lateral canthoplasty, as is often desired for the 'hunter eye', and hair restoration. The vocabulary is precise, the references are photo-based, and the patients are younger, in their early twenties. This is a completely different consultation than what plastic surgery was originally designed around," he continued.

Dr. Olga Bachilo, a board-certified plastic surgeon and the founder of Houston's Glamour Plastic Surgery and Med Spa, is seeing the same. "Since 2022, there has been an increase in male requests for facial surgery in my practice. My most popular male procedures used to be male breast reduction and eyelid surgery, but now include rhinoplasty, chin augmentation and botox to slim jawlines. These men have often done hours of research on the looksmaxxing forums and TikTok videos before they even enquire about an appointment and come with photos, words and expectations," she says.

Where the Trend Helps and Where It Misses

The issue isn't that more men are seeking aesthetic treatments, but in the motivations behind them. Practitioners are increasingly encountering patients who arrive not with subtle enhancement goals, but with digitally altered versions of themselves — faces pushed toward hyper-idealized, often unrealistic standards. That distinction especially matters when patients seeking refinement or proportional balance can't typically be treated within the scope of aesthetic medicine because they are chasing a transformation into something fundamentally different from who they are. This,is turn, presents a more complex clinical and ethical challenge.

"Aesthetic providers should pay attention to motivation," Dr. Thankachen says. "It helps to ask what is driving the request, how long the concern has been there, and whether social media is amplifying it. A thoughtful first step is slowing the process down and screening for body image distress. Body image distress means persistent worry about perceived flaws," he continues.

On TikTok, videos with the hashtag #looksmax has gained over 4.6 billion views,



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"It's like the chicken and the egg. People come in with online looks or online ideas, and the industry helps to promote that."
- Dr. Diana Ponsky

Dr. Nora Abaldawi, who is an award-winning cosmetic dentist and advanced facial aesthetician with a Master's in Orthodontics from the University of Warwick, agrees. When talking to MedEsthetics, she says looksmaxxing content tends to compress risk in the patient's mind. "Some men ask about combining multiple interventions, such as jawline filler plus under-chin fat reduction, while overlooking foundational issues like gum health, wear from grinding, or bite imbalance that can contribute to facial tension and an uneven look," she says. "Bringing the focus back to function helps. A stable bite, healthy gums, and careful management of clenching or TMJ symptoms often matter more to long-term appearance than any single aesthetic add-on," she continues.

How Medspas Can Help These Patients

For medspas, this means expanding the consultation process beyond surface-level goals. Providers must assess intent as much as anatomy by identifying when a patient is pursuing improvement versus identity alteration. In some cases, that requires setting firm boundaries, having direct, transparent conversations, or even declining treatment altogether.

The most responsible practitioners understand that not every request should end in a procedure. Sometimes, the best outcome is a recalibrated expectation rather than picking up a scalpel

"The culture increases the need for careful screening," Dr. Abaldawi says. "When the goal is based on an online ideal that keeps shifting, it is easier to see unrealistic expectations, distress over minor asymmetries, or a fixation on perceived flaws that others would not notice. In those cases, a responsible approach is to slow the plan down, prioritize reversible and conservative steps, and be willing to say no to treatments that are unlikely to meet the patient's expectations or could create harm. The most sustainable outcomes tend to come from subtle, staged improvements that protect oral health and facial balance, rather than trend-chasing changes designed to replicate a viral before-and-after."

"I've changed my consultation," says Dr. Bachilo. "I focus more on why a patient wants a procedure rather than what he wants. It's not the same person who wants their nose to be less ugly or someone who wants the latest look of the month they saw online.The successful patients want their nose to blend in with their face or their chin to blend with their profile. So I look for that and talk about it if necessary. After eight years you get a sense of who's ready and who's not ready to make a permanent decision," she continued.

"I ain't gonna be doing any of that shit anymore," the viral streamer said to his followers less than 24 hours after the incident. "I ain't going to be doing any more substances for a little while, hopefully forever."That same evening, however, Clavicluar was seen at the grand opening for Bacara Club in Miami the night following his hositalization, although undetermined if he was sober or not.

While it appears that his social sphere is collapsing in real time, as the emergency scare cause his publisist to quit because he reportedly will "not take his health seriously," it's uncertain if the damage he's done to the youth and their quest for apperarance optimiztion has come to the same realizations.

The real question isn't which came first, Clavicualr or the advent of men in wellness aesthetics does not matter —it's whether an industry built on enhancement is prepared to push back when optimization turns into harm. ME

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Joshua Eferighe is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics.*

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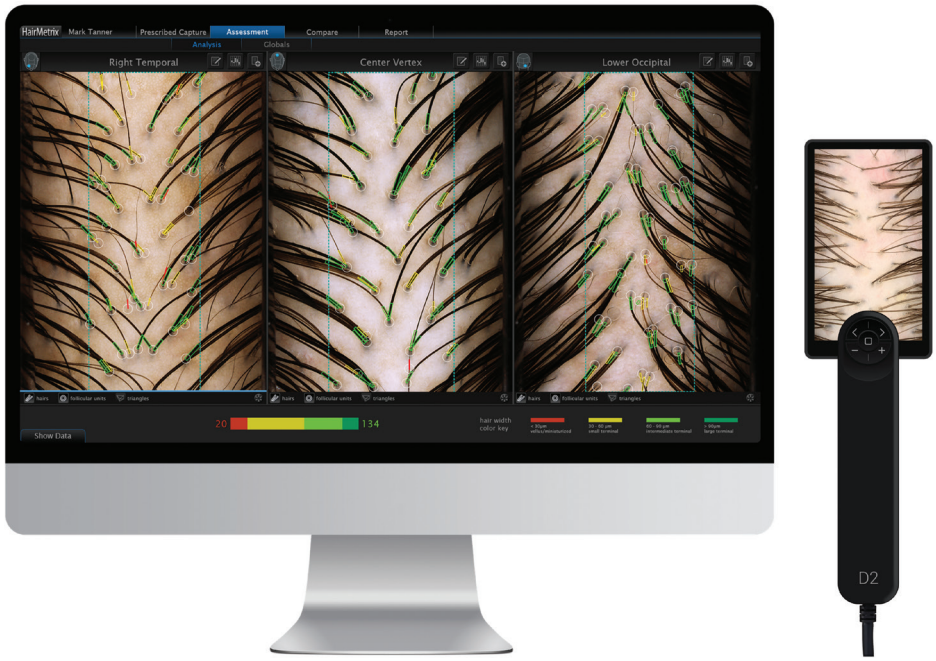

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Aerolase on the Shift Toward Preventative Male Aesthetics

Male patients are reshaping aesthetics with longevity-driven goals, preventative care, and rising treatment literacy.

The aesthetics industry is currently experiencing a foundational shift defined not only by groundbreaking clinical advancements and state-of-the-art technology, but a changing patient mindset: Male acceptance. Thanks to changing social trends and social media influence, men's quest for aesthetic wellness has brought forth a new terrain for the industry altogether, as male patients now account for a growing percentage of minimally invasive cosmetic procedures.[1] This surgency has brought a undeniable shift in the industry, not only with the influx of new male-focused products to the market but in the types of patients and the motivations behind their requests.

While, historically, female patients have been more exposed to aesthetic content and beauty trends, allowing them to arrive with more specific visual references, clinics today are witnessing male patients entering the category[2], often with clearer outcome-driven goals and increasing familiarity with aesthetic terminology, driven by the destigmatizing of male aesthetic discourse.

In this evolving landscape, medspas, practitioners and physicians alike are observing whether patients are responding to algorithm-driven ideals or entering care earlier as part of a broader wellness and longevity mindset.

In this Spotlight, Dr. Karan Lal of the Aerolase Advisory Board breaks down how male patients are reshaping consultation dynamics, treatment expectations, and the role of technology in modern aesthetic care.

THE NEW MALE AESTHETIC PATIENT

MedEsthetics: Have you seen an increase in younger male patients seeking laser-based treatments influenced by online aesthetics or "looksmaxxing" culture?

Dr. Lal: "Males are heavily seeking treatment for rejuvenation. The main concerns are acne, rosacea, hair loss, and periocular wrinkling. Many men are also seeking treatment for neck laxity. Part of this may be due to social media, but I think it's mostly due to concerns about longevity and not wanting to look tired."

MedEsthetics: Are these patients coming in earlier—as part of a preventative or optimization-focused mindset?

Dr. Lal: "Not all men come when it's too late—though some do, and then it becomes a surgical issue. Most men are wanting preventative treatment."

MedEsthetics: How are patients describing their goals? Are they using clinical language or referencing visual trends?

Dr. Lal: "Women often come in asking to look like celebrities, but men usually ask what they can do to look more youthful."

MedEsthetics: Why do you think this optimization mindset is resonating so strongly with young men?

Dr. Lal: "Men want to look younger just like women. We are all living longer and stronger, and if that doesn't show in the face and skin, it doesn't feel believable."

Social Media, Expectations & Misinformation

MedEsthetics: Do you think advanced technologies are helping correct misinformation from online spaces—or enabling more casual intervention?

Dr. Lal: "Misinformation will continue to spread given the many different sources providing information. Clinicians unfortunately are not regarded as highly online, with patients often favoring non-clinical voices."

MedEsthetics: Are patients expecting immediate, dramatic results similar to what they see online?

Dr. Lal: "Some do, but we have to be honest and not provide false expectations. Healthy skin is like building muscle—it takes time."

MedEsthetics: How do you reset expectations for patients used to algorithm-driven before-and-after content?

Dr. Lal: "I explain that images can be edited to show outcomes that didn't occur. I also walk through differences in treatments and safety considerations."

MedEsthetics: What does a realistic treatment journey look like compared to what's promoted online?

Dr. Lal: "It depends on the laser. Ablative treatments, for example, require about a 10-day healing period. That needs to be emphasized so patients are prepared for the commitment."

Technology, Access & Inclusivity

MedEsthetics: Devices like Aerolase are marketed for minimal downtime and broad skin-type safety. How is that changing patient behavior?

Dr. Lal: "People don't want downtime and want faster results. Treatments like the Aerolase NeoDerm allow for that. As an Nd:YAG laser, it targets redness, brown spots,

Image courtesy of Aerolase

and stimulates collagen—you leave the clinic with an immediate glow that continues improving."

MedEsthetics: Aerolase emphasizes safety across all Fitzpatrick skin types. How important is that in today's patient population?

Dr. Lal: "It's very important. Inclusivity allows us to offer the same treatments for all patients."

MedEsthetics: Are you seeing more patients with darker skin tones entering laser treatments?

Dr. Lal: "Yes. There is greater visibility of skin-of-color patients in energy-based treatments, which is encouraging more people to seek care."

MedEsthetics: How do you integrate devices like Aerolase with injectables or other treatments?

Dr. Lal: "The beauty of Nd:YAG devices like Aerolase is that they can be combined with all other treatment options, including injectables and microneedling."

Beyond Correction: Skin Quality & Treatment Philosophy

MedEsthetics: How do you position laser treatments—as corrective, preventative, or part of a broader strategy?

Dr. Lal: "It depends on the treatment. Some are all of the above, while others are more preventative. Aerolase NeoDerm is a combination, while other devices are more corrective."

MedEsthetics: Do you think skin quality—not just structure—is becoming the primary focus of male aesthetics?

Dr. Lal: "I think men want it all—they just can't always articulate it. Some are hyperfocused on one thing, but most are open to global optimization."

MedEsthetics: If a patient influenced by looksmaxxing came in, what's the first thing you'd want them to understand?

Dr. Lal: "Rome wasn't built in a day—and neither is your skin or jawline. The goal is enhancement, not perfection."

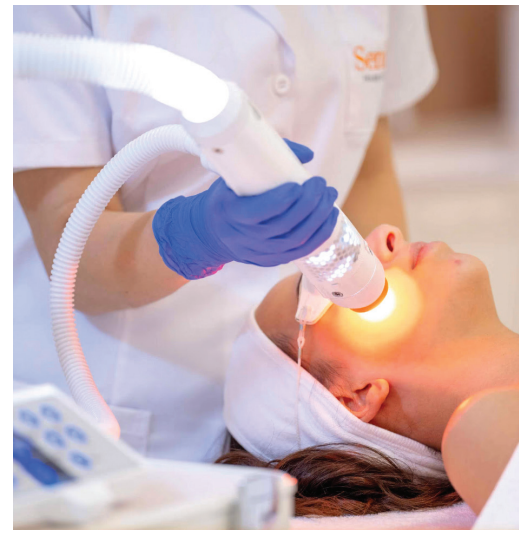
Gatekeeping, Practice Reality & the Future

MedEsthetics: Has social media reduced the role of dermatologists as gatekeepers of aesthetic knowledge?

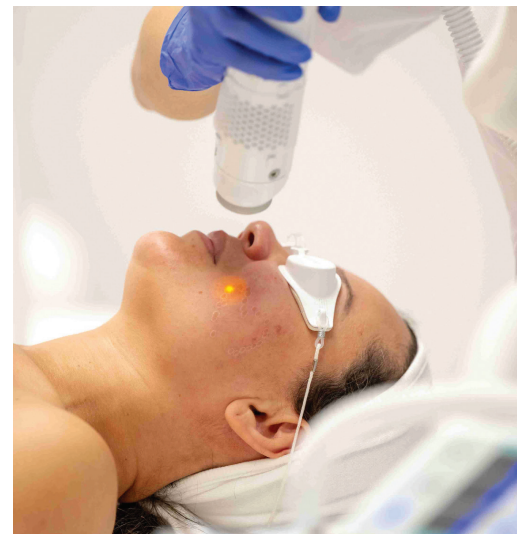
Dr. Lal: "Yes—we aren't gatekeepers anymore. I don't believe in gatekeeping. True skincare advice should come from a cohesive team of physicians, PAs, NPs, and aestheticians. The challenge is that messaging isn't always aligned."

MedEsthetics: Have you had to turn patients away based on trend-driven expectations?

Dr. Lal: "All the time. I say no more than I say yes. If patients come in with rigid expectations from images, they're often not the right fit."







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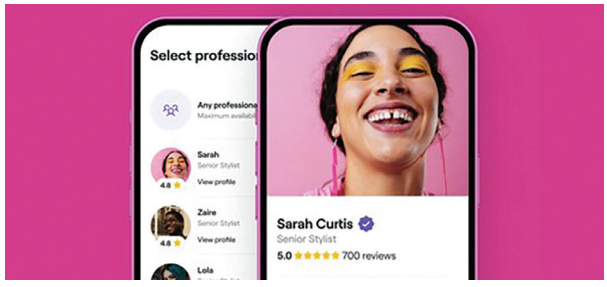
Joshua Eferighe is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics.*



NEW DATA: GLP-1 WEIGHT LOSS IS DRIVING A BOOM IN AESTHETIC TREATMENTS

Data from Allergan Aesthetics (AA) highlights show how quickly GLP-1 weight-loss medications are reshaping the aesthetics landscape as patients look for ways to address facial changes that can come with rapid weight loss. According to the study, from 2023-2024, medical weight loss patients surged dramatically, increasing by 137%, with many seeking solutions for facial volume loss and skin laxity.



FRESHA LAUNCHES SEARCHABLE PROFESSIONAL PROFILES, REDEFINING DISCOVERY IN BEAUTY AND WELLNESS

Fresha, the world's leading AI-powered booking platform for beauty and wellness, announced the launch of Professional Profiles — a market-defining marketplace update in discovery and booking for global beauty, wellness and selfcare industry in April. Designed to bring individual professionals to the forefront of the booking experience, the feature connects the consumer to the professional at a level not previously available at scale, transforming how clients discover, evaluate, and choose who they book with, while evolving Fresha into a true marketplace for talent.

THE TOX SURPASSES 50 OPEN STUDIOS NATIONWIDE

The Tox, an aesthetic wellness brand focused on noninvasive body contouring services, has announced that it has surpassed 50 open studios across the United States. The milestone marks a significant moment in the company's national expansion as it continues growing its studio network and franchise system.The company also reported



that it has awarded 150 franchise territories nationwide, with more than 100 additional studio locations expected to open within the next 18 months. The development reflects increasing interest in the aesthetic wellness sector and continued expansion of service-based franchise models across the United States.

PROLLENIUM LAUNCHES PACE TRAINING & EDUCATION PORTAL



PROLLENIUM, a global leader in medical aesthetic innovation, announced the launch of the PACE Training & Education Portal — a digital learning platform designed to expand access to the PACE (PROLLENIUM Advanced Clinical Education) program.

The portal provides aesthetic practitioners with a centralized destination for training and professional development through personalized learning pathways and gamified engagement, combining physician-led instruction with practical guidance tailored for real-world clinical settings.

"The PACE Training & Education Portal demonstrates our commitment to providing practical clinical education for our partners to complement the high standards we hold for our products," said Walter Geiger, PROLLENIUM's interim CEO.

Images courtesy of manufacturers



Image courtesy of Skin Synthesis at Adobe Stock

Skin Synthesis Becomes First Medical Spa in the World To Earn Quad A Accreditation

Skin Synthesis becomes the first medspa worldwide to secure QUAD A accreditation, raising the bar for patient safety.

Skin Synthesis, a Seattle-based medical spa is officially the first medspa in the world to receive accreditation from QUAD A (American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities), the globally recognized gold standard for patient safety in healthcare

The news follows the launch of QUAD A's non-surgical aesthetic and wellness accreditation program this past March and marks a critical shift in an industry that has grown without consistent regulation, standardized protocols, or enforceable safety benchmarks.

Skin Synthesis founder and medical director Jennifer Hartley, ACNP, pursued accreditation to bring a higher level of safety, structure, and accountability into aesthetic medicine.

"This isn't just a milestone for our clinic, it's a shift in how this industry operates," said Jennfier. "For years, aesthetic medicine has lacked a clear, enforceable standard for safety. Now there's a benchmark, and practices will be measured against it."

What It Took to Become the First

- Building and formalizing extensive policies and procedures
- Implementing structured staff training and competency standards
- Establishing detailed safety protocols, documentation, and audit systems
- Upgrading medical supplies, emergency readiness, and facility organization
- An on-site assessment of the facility by a trained surveyor with experience in outpatient healthcare.

Skin Synthesis achieved full compliance with zero citations.

According to QUAD A Chief Executive Officer Thomas Terranova, JD, MA, MBA while the process of getting accredited by QUAD A is rigorous it's very attainable, and the benefits of implementing the requirements are numerous.

"I used to tell facilities that accreditation is simple but not easy, said Thomas. "The expectations are clear and achievable, but they take discipline to sustain."

Joshua Eferighe is the associate managing editor of *MedEsthetics.*

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