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Lunchtime Laser Surgery Erase's Wrinkles

"LUNCHTIME" LASER SURGERY ERASES WRINKLES WITH NO DOWN-TIME AT WORK

New Minimalist Procedures Are Quick, Discreet and More Affordable
David Goldberg, M.D.

Too busy to do more than put cream on those wrinkles you see in the mirror?

Lunchtime lasers are the latest breakthrough in cosmetic laser surgery.

The 15-minute "minimalist" procedure leaves no trace and gets you back to work with no downtime.

In the war against wrinkles and skin imperfections, these quick, painless procedures - known as "CoolTouch™" and "Photorejuvenation" - are the perfect solution for women on the go. Gone are hospital fees, anesthesia and pre-testing by an internist typically done in preparation for the older style laser procedures.

The goal is the same: to promote new growth of collagen.

Collagen, the biological equivalent of cement, gives the skin structure. When collagen breaks down as you age, the skin begins to sag, wrinkle and discolor.

The breakthroughs in laser surgery are the result of studies on collagen rejuvenation. Lab studies on women receiving the new "minimalist" procedures have demonstrated that collagen renewal is virtually the same as experienced with the older more invasive methods.

The new "minimalist" procedures are faster and less traumatic to the skin, and the results are comparable to older more aggressive forms of surgery. Those methods took more than an hour to perform and put patients into a week's seclusion. Even after a week of healing, women covered burned spots with heavy makeup for two to six months.

In the new procedures, the surface of the skin remains unaffected. The chances of infection or other complications, such as scarring or uneven skin tone, are negligible.

This is how it works:

-- CoolTouch™ uses a spurt of cryogen for analgesia and skin protection coupled with a pulse of laser energy delivered selectively to treat subsurface layers of skin without a burn.

Typically, one treatment a month for three to six months improves wrinkles and acne scars.

-- Photorejuvenation is a light-based technology similar to the laser.

It uses Intense Pulsed Light (IPL), delivered through short and long wave length filters, to penetrate the outer layers of skin to different tissue depths selectively.

This light-based technology treats vascular redness, pigmented brown spots, collagen erosion and sun damage all at once. Its use is not limited to the face; it can be used on the neck, chest and hands, too.

Photorejuvenation is typically done in a series of five treatments spaced three weeks apart.

The popularity of laser skin resurfacing is clear: More than 150,000 procedures were performed in the U.S. in 1998. Interest is expected to soar in the next few years as 20-somethings and aging baby boomers realize how easy it is to do.

No pain, no wound and low cost combine to make the idea of erasing imperfections more agreeable than ever.

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