

Anti-Aging for Every Skin Type

By: David J. Goldberg M.D.

Have you ever wondered why your skin sags, wrinkles and discolors with age?

It's the breakdown of collagen, the biological equivalent of cement and the material that gives the skin structure. Fortunately, dermatologists have an arsenal of new "minimalist" weapons in the battle to promote collagen renewal.

Photorejuvenation is one of the most popular of the new "lunchtime" procedures that get you back to work in short order, without a trace of redness or pain.

Doctors use Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) to penetrate the outer layers of skin and promote the re-growth of collagen beneath.

Pulsed light therapy is delivered through short and long wavelength filters to various tissue depths. Typically, a series of treatments involves five 10-15 minute sessions administered approximately three weeks apart. One touch-up every six months is ideal for maintenance.

The result: renewed growth of collagen, improvement in red, ruptured capillaries and blushing of the skin, and removal of the dense pigment areas we often call "liver spots."

After several sessions, skin color improves, skin quality is improved and there is clear evidence of new collagen formation under the microscope -- a first for a non-laser light source.

Its use is not limited to the face; it can be performed on the neck, chest and hands, too.

Such new "minimalist" procedures are faster and less traumatic to the skin, and the results may be comparable to some older, more aggressive forms of surgery.

CoolTouch and Smoothbeam laser surgery are other new weapons in the arsenal. These treatments involve the use of a laser to penetrate the outer layers of skin and promote collagen renewal beneath the surface.

These minimalist procedures offer safe solutions to those who would not have risked the more invasive procedures of the past. People of all ethnic groups are candidates for CoolTouch and Smoothbeam. We usually do not perform photorejuvenation on people with darker skin. The reason: CoolTouch and Smoothbeam renew collagen at deep levels without touching the outer layers where pigment damage can occur. Photorejuvenation works on deep and surface levels and is more likely to cause discoloration in darker-skinned individuals.

Lunchtime therapies also open new doors to younger women. You can start "minimalist" therapy suited to your skin type as early as your ' 20s, allowing your skin to stay young as you age.

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