

les nouvelles *esthétique* & Spa

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Cover
courtesy of Yves Saint Laurent

SIMPLE THERAPIES

That Renew Skin

beyond skin deep combinations

FOR AS LONG AS THE BUSINESS OF SKIN CARE HAS EXISTED, there has been a never-ending supply of creams, pills, ointments and lotions promising skin care addicts the fountain of youth. Everything from animal byproducts, mixtures of spoiled food and exotic plant extracts have been used at one point in history to treat a variety of common skin conditions. Unfortunately, it is easy to be misinformed about the most productive strategies to combat skin problems.

In recent years, developments in esthetics technology have changed the way people approach their skin concerns. The scalpel is not the only answer anymore. A new generation of nonsurgical treatments that go beyond the superficial quick fixes of the past by boosting the body's own regenerative and healing processes has been developed. The solution to fix many common skin issues is to treat the cause, not just the visual symptoms. To take full advantage of new esthetics methods, especially for treating conditions like wrinkles and acne, combination therapy using treatments that complement one another's benefits is a great way to obtain improved results for clients. ➔

BY LOUIS SILBERMAN



Pimples, pustules and zits, oh my!

Acne is one of the most common and problematic skin conditions a skin care professional will deal with in their practice. Characterized by red, inflamed and oily skin, it has the power to ruin self-confidence, pictures and first impressions. Movies and TV often depict acne as the scourge of a high school teenager's social life. However, it can appear well into a person's 30s, leaving scars that can last a lifetime.

What causes acne? The root of the condition lies in a simple bacteria called *Propionibacterium acnes*. Living mainly in follicles on the face, neck and chest, it feeds on a substance called sebum, a product of the sebaceous glands responsible for keeping skin and hair moisturized. Problems arise when hormones in the body stimulate overproduction of the substance. Whiteheads are formed as pores become clogged, and the additional nutrients cause a big jump in the number of acne bacteria present. The resulting enzymes and fatty acids created during this interaction then begin damaging the wall of the follicle, causing an inflammatory response. Left untreated,

the harm caused by this cycle can leave skin scarred and discolored.

Retin-A has long been the drug of choice to combat severe cases of acne. Unfortunately, it does come with an extensive list of side effects that includes redness, dry skin and burning sensations. Thanks to recent advancements in esthetics technology, skin care professionals now have safer drug-free ways to help their clients obtain clearer complexions. To give your clients maximum results, try this multi-directional acne therapy approach:

- **Fight bacteria**

Photofacials have become one of the most effective ways to treat acne. This procedure uses Intense Pulse Light (IPL) technology that projects a scatter beam of light, which specifically targets red and brown skin tones. In bursts measured in thousandths of a second, the laser heat focuses on the infected pores, effectively killing the bacteria. At the same time, the treatment stimulates collagen production in the skin, greatly assisting the body in repairing the damage caused by infection.

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photofacial



photo courtesy of National Laser Institute

Using transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation, electrical current measured in millionths of an ampere is applied to the skin. This process increases protein synthesis and cell regeneration.

IPL photofacial treatments may be performed anywhere from once a week to once a month, depending on the severity of the client's acne outbreak.

- **Clear off clutter**

Now that the bacteria are out of the picture, it is time to remove the secondary cause of acne: clogged pores. Dead skin cells and oil produced in the follicles create the perfect environment for an acne outbreak.

Chemical peels are a great way to get rid of these dangers. Using a variety of acids, including alpha hydroxy, beta hydroxy and trichloroacetic, peels exfoliate the skin and create a softer complexion. This type of treatment also helps even out the skin's texture, a definite benefit for clients with light acne scarring.

For the best results, use chemical peels to supplement the effects of IPL photofacial treatments.

- **Erase scars**

People with moderate to deep acne scarring require a more advanced treatment than a traditional facial peel. In these situations, a fractional laser has the ability to re-

duce both scars and wrinkles, which is ideal for clients with a pockmarked skin texture.

The fractional laser works by splitting a single laser beam into thousands of microbeams. The heat from the microbeams penetrates the epidermis and dermis, coagulating microscopic columns of tissue. This stimulates the surrounding skin cells to begin a healing process that creates natural collagen deep within the skin and replaces scar tissue with healthier skin cells. Unlike the older technique of ablative laser skin resurfacing, a method that painfully removes entire layers of skin, the fractional laser targets only a small section at a time, leaving the surrounding area unharmed.

Once a client has completed their photofacial and chemical peel regimen, fractional laser scar reduction treatments may begin. Depending on the severity of the scarring, a total of six to eight monthly treatments is recommended.

- **Offer take home treatments**

Many beauty products can sabotage an acne treatment regimen by clogging pores

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Once a client has completed their photofacial and chemical peel regimen, fractional laser scar reduction treatments may begin.

and creating a place for acne to form. Tell your clients to avoid oily moisturizers and heavy foundations. Instead, recommend oil-free moisturizers, mineral powder foundation and a face wash with salicylic acid. Because acne is so common, it is important for a spa business to carry products that help clients maintain a clear complexion between treatments. This gives skin care professionals a unique opportunity to up sell and keep their customers happy at the same time.

Wrinkled, crinkled and creased

When it comes to judging a person's age, nothing says "old" more than wrinkles. We have grown to loathe these creases in our skin so much that we have created an entire vocabulary dedicated to describing them all: frown lines, turkey neck, furrowed brows, bulldog jowls, crow's feet, laugh lines and the dreaded 11s. Regardless of age, most clients request esthetic procedures to prevent or correct wrinkles. For this reason, it is important to have a proficient knowledge of the various types of wrinkle treatments, including which ones work and which ones do not.

Did you know that the business of treating wrinkles dates as far back as ancient Egyptian times? Even in that era, people were preoccupied with looking more youthful. With limited understanding of the skin, they used a myriad of bizarre ingredients and methods to make skin look younger. Early esthetics professionals would apply animal oils, tree sap, sour milk, urine and incense in an attempt to make skin smoother. Some cultures even used fire as a primitive form of exfoliation and skin resurfacing.

Today we have a much better comprehension of skin biology and how wrinkles form. With a variety of high-tech tools at their disposal, skin care professionals can now provide treatments that allow clients to maintain a youthful appearance or even reverse the effects of aging.

Teach skin a new trick

During the process of aging, skin loses collagen and becomes thinner, making it more vulnerable to damage. Microcurrent therapy is one nonsurgical method that offers a solution to the problem. Using transcutaneous electrical

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fractional laser



photo courtesy of National Laser Institute

nerve stimulation, electrical currents measured in millionths of an ampere are applied to the skin. This process increases protein synthesis and cell regeneration.

The electrical currents used in this treatment are on the same scale as the currents that are already produced in skin cells, preventing side effects such as pain or unpleasant muscle contractions.

Microcurrent treatments are safe to perform once every three days.

Radio waves— making more than just music

Radiofrequency skin tightening is an interesting and effective treatment that is based on the same technology used to broadcast sounds from radio stations. Using focused radio waves, heat is projected into the dermis that breaks

down damaged collagen and causes the body to replace it with healthy collagen. This results in tighter and plumper skin, making it a great procedure to perform on sagging skin on the neck, arms and stomach.

For the best results, do a series of six radiofrequency skin tightening treatments once every seven to 10 days.

At home care

Clients interested in trying fractional laser wrinkle reduction or radiofrequency skin rejuvenation will benefit from a pre- and post-treatment skin care regimen. Just make sure that it includes ingredients that support the post-treatment healing process.

With all of the skin care fads and expensive miracle creams on the market, it is often difficult to know what to look for in a daily moisturizer. If in doubt, here are a few desirable ingredients to seek for in a product:

- Vitamin C. A key player in the creation of collagen in the skin, it also acts as an antioxidant that reduces the damage caused by free radicals.
- Hyaluronic acid. An important component of connective tissue in the skin, hyaluronic acid lubricates and cushions skin from premature aging.
- Retinol. Helps skin retain moisture and increases natural collagen production.

New products and treatments pop up every day claiming to be the next big thing. It is important to research all claims before repeating them to clients. Becoming educated on the most up-to-date treatments—and determining how they can complement your existing services—is invaluable in keeping your customers happy and coming back for more. ■



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