

Dr. Coley



# The truth about skin care

What to expect during a professional consultation

by Dr. H. Christopher Coley

**W**ith all of the skin care products available in the marketplace, which do you choose? Is your current skin care regimen giving you the results you want?

If not, then you should schedule a consultation with a trained professional such as a licensed aesthetician who works under a cosmetic surgeon or dermatologist. Utilizing the services available in a medical facility will allow access to various treatment strengths.

During a visit, a thorough history of your current regimen and previous skin treatments will be discussed. Your goals and concerns regarding your skin also

should be addressed. A skin analysis then will be performed, which will include a look at pigmentation, possible suspicious lesions, redness, fine blood vessels, unwanted hair, scarring, acne, and overall skin texture and quality. A customized treatment plan then will be recommended based on a discussion of what's needed to restore and renew the skin, prevent premature aging, and treat any identified conditions.

Throughout the discussion, each treatment modality and product will be explained, including potential side effects. Both short- and long-term goals with therapy are included as well.

## A new regimen

An effective, medical-grade skin care regimen should include several key elements. The first step should be a PH-balanced cleanser, which should be used twice daily. A broad-spectrum sun protection applied on a daily basis also is necessary, as are antioxidants, which have been proven to preserve and protect the skin from negative environmental factors.

In order to keep skin exfoliated and looking bright, hydroxy acids and vitamin A also are included in most skin care regimens. Specifically, vitamin A communicates at a cellular level, encouraging healthy cell production.

Each of these ingredients is available in a variety of strengths and potencies from several different brands. Some of the most reputable, clinically proven lines include iS Clinical, Obagi and SkinMedica. Each line has specialty products for conditions like acne, rosacea and pigmentation. They're also used as anti-aging solutions and can offer amazing results if used as directed by an experienced aesthetician.

### In-office treatments

In addition to a home-care regimen, in-office procedures also might be recommended during a consultation. These can include chemical peels, facials, injectables, intense pulsed light (IPL) and laser treatments, and microdermabrasion.

Microdermabrasion and chemical peels exfoliate the skin, soften fine lines and wrinkles, help with acne and pore-clogging, and generally renew the skin. Chemical peels vary in strength from superficial to very deep. Stronger peels require a physician's supervision and often produce the best results.

IPL and laser treatments are helpful in

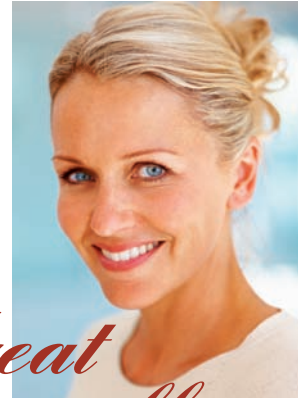
treating pigmentation, fine blood vessels, redness, acne, and unwanted hair. The most significant advancement in laser technology is the Fractional CO2 laser for resurfacing. This method can help subtract years from your appearance with little downtime, improving fine lines, wrinkles, pigmentation and scarring in the process. Additionally, some lines and wrinkles in the face are best treated with Botox, Dysport, and dermal fillers such as Juvéderm and Restylane.

If you want to renew skin and keep it healthy for years to come, then see a medical professional for a customized plan. Someone who's experienced and educated in all of the options available can be a priceless resource in helping you to determine the best way to address your skin care needs. ❁

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