



## Anti-Aging Trends:

It's a new year, and, judging by the past few years, we can expect the business of looking and staying young to continue to amaze us with new and exciting advances. Here's an inside look, based on the growing trends in treatments and technology, on what you can expect to see in the coming months and years in the aesthetics business.

There's one thing that aesthetic practitioners unanimously agree on, and that is the continuing revolution in noninvasive procedures to give skin and body a more youthful appearance—from fillers to the use of pulse light and laser light devices. Those two words—noninvasive procedure—will be the mantra of the next five years or so—both because of advanced and ever-evolving technology, and in answer to the demands of today's warp-speed society, which wants the quick fix.

The quick fix applies to recovery time, too. Though Dr. Mark Erlich, director of the Profiles and Contours Center for Plastic Surgery in New York City, still believes that surgical options “will always yield the superior result,” he is convinced that, “the combination of more and more Baby Boomers wanting to look young without going into hiding for two weeks will always make the “quick fix” the more attractive option.”

Aesthetic experts agree that the one area where you can expect the most dramatic advances is in photo light-based treatments, such as LED (light emission diodes). Whether such treatments are used to restore a youthful appearance by tightening skin, refurbishing skin, wiping away fine lines and wrinkles, or to tackle acne or rosacea, these procedures are expected to grow so rapidly as to make today's procedures seem almost primitive. And, since these treatments are noninvasive, they are therefore more convenient, accessible and available.

Dr. Julio Gallo of the Miami (FL) Institute, predicts that “Newer generations of light therapies such as LED that are safer than traditional lasers will become commonplace, because studies are showing that they are effective and safe.”

Skin maintenance and rejuvenation using light technology, will be as common as facials are now. “People will treat aging changes at a much earlier age than they would normally elect surgical procedures,” says Dr Erlich.

And procedures that are easier to obtain and faster to recover from are just what today's busy Baby Boomers want, says Dr. Phillip Jorge of AQUAesthetics M.D. in California. “People are looking for alternatives to plastic surgery,” says Jorge. “They are more apt to spend money on noninvasive procedures with little or no downtime than to go under the knife.”



Dr. Sharon McQuillan of the Ageless Aesthetic Institute in Columbus, OH, cites a study last year conducted by Gallup and Allergan, the manufacturer of Botox, that “clearly supports this trend for noninvasive procedures. When aesthetically oriented consumers were asked what aspects of their face that they would like to change, 52 percent said that changing their skin texture was the most important. They also wanted to look better ‘naturally’—more rested, refreshed, less stressed, calm,” she said.

While noninvasive procedures are readily available today, expect to see a whole new generation of super fillers—new and improved versions of what's on the market now, for example, that may last longer and cost less, as well as new discoveries.

Most cosmetic dermatologists and plastic surgeons continue to put Botox in as close to the “miracle drug” category as you'll find, based on present results and expected improved ones.

“I feel that Botox has revolutionized aesthetic medicine,” says Dr. Anne T. Stubbs, owner and director of Ageless MedSpa at Kenneth's in, OH. “As more Americans become less fearful and more educated about the benefits of Botox for dynamic rhytids, we will see an increasing demand. Once the public fully understands the preventative effects of Botox, its use may be as common as getting your hair highlighted or getting your nails done!”

That prediction notwithstanding, the experts also feel that the emphasis on “medical” will continue to grow in the medical spa industry, as more and more different types of physicians enter the industry, and more physicians and entrepreneurs partner to expand or open new businesses.

You may also see more spas taking the medical spa concept even further with the addition of more medical personnel to supervise and also meet expected new regulations. That means a boom in aesthetics physicians, which translates into more access to such treatments. It also brings a caution. Dr. Erlich says, “Practitioners of every ilk are streaming into the cosmetic marketplace, and, as always, the consumer must look for the properly trained professional with significant experience in the procedure contemplated.”

With that expansion, and the evolution of more advanced procedures and treatments, you can expect increased Federal and state regulation of this hybrid industry as well. This is a relatively new growth industry, which is still in the baby steps stage. As it revs up to a toddler's walk, regulatory agencies will become more educated and interested in service menus and legislate accordingly.

“I predict more and more ‘real medicine’ (injections, lasers, smaller less invasive procedures) will take place in the medical spa environment under the supervision of physicians,” says Dr. Gallo. “Likewise, the offices of doctors in this field will cater to the more sophisticated and discerning patients.”

Some of those discerning patients—who are also in a hurry for the quick fix—will see an increase in the availability and variety of the so-called “lunchtime treatments” both in the anti-aging and aesthetic skin-care maintenance areas. According to Janet Neigel, M.D., FACS, of Neigel Center for Cosmetic and Laser Surgery in West Orange, NJ: “There are many new things on the horizon, such as threading techniques: featherlift, progressive facelift suture and new variations of these techniques.”

Sometimes people forget that the core business of dermatologists is to take care of “problem” skin, and that part of the practice, says Dr. Stubbs, will continue to benefit from new discoveries. “I think one of the most dramatic advances is our approach to the treatment of acne. With ALA (aminolevulinic acid) and light-based treatments, we are able to achieve superior results without the use of medications that are fraught with worrisome side effects (e.g., Accutane). I think both teen patients and those with adult-onset acne are going to embrace these new treatments.”

I asked several experts what procedures they foresee as becoming “routine” in the next five years. There were quite a few opinions. Laser hair removal was one. Non-invasive skin-tightening treatments was another. The latter was predicted to be an area in which to expect major advances. Said California-based Dr. Phillip Jorge of AQUAesthetics, “As the technologies for nonablative and radio-frequency skin-tightening advance, dramatic improvements in skin rejuvenation will be seen. We're talking about tightening and stimulating collagen production without breaking the surface of the skin.”

## What's on the Horizon?

This, he said, combined with the wrinkle-reducing injectables such as Botox and wrinkle fillers such as Restylane, (“with others in the pipeline”) will become the mainstay for youthful skin maintenance.

Minimally invasive procedures are next on the list. Dr. Jorge defines them as “the procedures which address the issues that are beyond laser and injectable correction and which have a very short recovery period.” The featherlift is a good example of this. “It ‘lifts’ sagging skin on the face by using several strategically placed sutures inserted in key areas of the face,” says Dr. Jorge. “The downtime is measured in days.”

While many will opt for noninvasive or minimally invasive treatments, major elective plastic surgery procedures will continue to increase, but, the experts predict that new surgical procedures will be safer and promote faster healing than ever before.

Dr. Erlich cites the use of tissue adhesives as one such technique. “I have personally used them for the past four years, and I frequently have patients looking excellent as early as one week after a full facelift.” And what about affordability? Will the proliferation of certain treatments lower their costs? Dr. McQuillan feels it has more to do with the proliferation of practitioners.

“Competition will eventually drive prices lower. Laser technology will become more affordable, and this price savings can be transferred to the client. . .” said Dr. McQuillan.

One doctor went one step further, predicting home techniques, but with a caveat: “The better techniques will always be more expensive,” said Dr. David Goldberg, M.D., J.D., director of Skin Laser & Surgery Specialists of NY/NJ. “Home techniques are bound to become available, will be much less expensive and will not work as well.”

So those are the buzzwords:

noninvasive, threadlift, LED's, safe, fast, effective, and all 21st century.