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Secrets

**TO LOOKING
YOUR BEST**

At Any Age

Dedication

This book is dedicated to my daughters Kosi and Oge Umerah from who I draw my Inspiration and art, and to all the women in my life that have been with me in this journey in the pursuit of Beauty.

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Preface

If you're wondering why you are reading this book, let's take a deep dive into our psyches. Take a look in the mirror. Examine the different parts of your body. What do you like about your appearance? What things would you change?

Everyone has something about his/her appearance that we feel could be improved—that one aspect that you feel diminishes who you really are inside. Is it acne? Saggy, drooping eyelids? Extra weight on the thighs or buttocks? Crow's feet or other wrinkles? What about dark circles under your eyes? No one wants to look tired and worn out all the time.

Well, you've come to the right place! Feeling down about that one thing that you feel others always see first can negatively impact how we interact with others. It can cause us to avoid eye contact, buy clothing that covers the body issue, or even avoid events (concerts, family reunions, JOB INTERVIEWS) that we might otherwise attend

wholeheartedly, without reservation or second thought.

A negative self-image can even keep us from pursuing our dreams, having the courage to step out and take a chance on something new or asking that cute guy/gal at the office to dinner. If you think about it, that negativity impacts the makeup and clothes we purchase, the trips we take, and the makeovers we'd like to enjoy (but avoid for fear of drawing attention to our issue).

Introduction – **THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY**

Social Science: the study of how people interact with one another.

Social science research indicates that a person's physical appearance has a meaningful, sometimes profound, impact on life experiences and opportunities, but the story is much more complicated than people might expect. For the purposes of this book, let's just take a look at the research from an aesthetic perspective. Consider the **halo effect**.

Halo Effect: a type of cognitive bias in which our overall impression of a person influences how we feel and think about their character.

A common halo effect example is attractiveness and the tendency to assign positive qualities to an at-

tractive person. For example, you might see a physically beautiful person and assume they are generous, smart, or trustworthy. This bias is so common that the halo effect is sometimes generalized to refer to the specific assumption that “what is beautiful is good”. One study showed that people make these assumptions about youthfulness, too. People are more likely to have more favorable perceptions of people with a younger, baby-like appearance than those who appear older. (Witten, 2022)

The halo effect is a form of stereotyping. You assume everyone who exhibits a particular trait is the same and make assumptions about them that might be untrue. As part of the halo effect, you notice a single trait about someone and then attach other qualities to them and form an overall impression. When you notice a positive trait and then make positive assumptions, it's called the halo effect. When you notice a negative trait and form a negative impression, it's called the horn effect. (Witten, 2022)

For the most part, attractive people enjoy a lot of perks. Highly attractive people are presumed by others to have a variety of positive personality traits, such as altruism, stability, and intelligence, compared to less attractive people, as though an invisible “halo” were shining down upon the beauti-

ful people of the world. This helps to explain rampant appearance discrimination in the workplace, dating market, and even in our court system. In his book *Beauty Pays*, economist David Hamermesh shows that attractive people are more likely to be employed, paid higher wages, more likely to be approved for a loan, negotiate loans with better terms, etc.

We can observe this phenomenon (bias) if we pay attention. I remember an occasion when I was hosting an event at a hotel. In preparation, I was running errands in my VERY casual clothes, wearing a baseball cap. I was struggling with carrying armloads of materials to set up and walked past four men sitting outside. They glanced at me and then carried on their conversation. I was disgusted but not really surprised. A little while later, I walk past the SAME FOUR MEN, but this time, I am dressed to the hilt. Christian Louboutin heels, hair in place, red lipstick and a sexy black dress. I am only carrying a few things, but these SAME FOUR MEN almost tripped over themselves to help me open the door. THE HALO EFFECT!

And while this may seem unfair (it is) and biased (it is), I encourage you to TAKE HEART! Help is here! Find the beautiful YOU within the pages of this book and begin a new life free of negative

self-talk and excuses for why you can't attend, join, or otherwise be a part of every joy life offers. The world is, indeed, at your fingertips. Take the reins and become your best YOU today – **Ageless Beauty** is achievable through the science of arts and medicine at any stage of life.

Chapter **ONE**

“I’m Not Going!”

“

“It’s okay to wake up and look however you look. You are beautiful regardless.”

- Ella Mai

*A*re you the parent of a teen? Remember being a teenager yourself? If you answered “yes” to either of these questions, acne was probably an issue, perhaps a BIG issue. Consider the scenario below:

Mom: “Get ready, Shenika. We have to leave for the family reunion in 10 minutes”.

Shenika: “I’m not going”.

Mom: “What do you mean, you’re not going? Of course, you’re going; what’s wrong with you?”

Shenika (screaming now): “I’m just not going! Stop bugging me; I have better things to do!”

You might ask yourself, what does this have to do with acne? Maybe nothing, but just maybe, everything! Shenika has a pimple on the end of her nose, and she is determined not to go anywhere she doesn’t have to go. And while we would hope, as parents, that Shenika would share with us her frustration and feelings about the beginning of acne on her face, she probably wouldn’t. Let’s face it: getting our teens to talk to us about anything is almost impossible. So how do we know what’s bugging them? We ask!

The rush and chaos of our everyday lives can be challenging even without teens. But we must take the time to pay attention to their behaviors, moods, etc., if we want to know what’s going on with them. We must be able to sit down and calmly assure our teens that we care about their feelings and that we are open to talking about anything; that we want to help solve any issues or problems they are experiencing, if at all possible. Remember to assure your teen that your conversations are confidential.

So, if you see yourself in the above scenario, consider beginning with a calm and open conversation with your teen. Even if you have a close and trusting relationship with your fickle human, acne is still likely not a topic he/she would want to discuss. Following is information about the different types and causes of teenage acne as well as treatment options. At the end of this chapter, you will find some Before and After photos that you might even consider sharing with that teenager who seems to have gone off the deep end.

7 Common Teen Skin Conditions

Seven of the most teen skin conditions include:

1. **Acne** – By far the most common malady, acne is a highly treatable skin condition that responds to a variety of treatments. The sooner treatment is started, the better. Scarring can occur early on and last a lifetime.
2. **Eczema & Dermatitis** – Teenagers and young adults can experience eczema and/or dermatitis, an inflammation of the skin caused by excessive dryness of the skin. Symptoms range from itching to redness to patches of discoloration.
3. **Dandruff** – Dandruff is a common condition that causes the skin on the scalp to flake. It isn't contagious or serious. But it can be embarrassing and difficult to treat. Mild dandruff can be treated with a gentle daily shampoo. If that doesn't work, a medicated shampoo may help.
4. **Athlete's Foot** – (Tinea pedis) is a fungal skin infection that usually begins between the toes. It is caused by the same type of fungi (dermatophytes) that causes ringworm and jock itch. Damp socks, shoes, and warm, humid conditions favor the organisms' growth.

5. **Cold Sores** – Also called fever blisters, cold sores are small blisters that develop on the lips or around the mouth and are caused by the herpes simplex virus. The sores usually clear up without treatment within 7 to 10 days.
6. **Excessive sweating** – Primary hyperhidrosis is caused by faulty nerve signals that trigger eccrine sweat glands to become overactive. It usually affects the palms, soles, underarms and sometimes the face.
7. **Sunburn** – Caused by too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. UV light may be from the sun or artificial sources, such as sunlamps and tanning beds. UVA is the wavelength of light that can penetrate the deep layers of skin and lead to skin damage over time.

These are just the most common conditions that affect teenagers. Most of the above conditions can be managed by simple, over-the-counter remedies, but we will give special emphasis to acne, excessive sweating and sunburn, as these are the leading issues for this age group.

Acne

Question: So, as far as teenagers and their self-confidence, what would you recommend? I know you

diagnose it, but is there anything you would say to a teenager to help them? Is there specific advice or words of confidence that I can offer my teen?

Answer: I would first reassure my teenager that treatments are available and that I am here to help. Once you see that first appearance of acne, act immediately. Many of us mothers do not seek advice from doctors or aesthetic providers regarding acne because we believe that it will just go away. However, I have seen the condition in 40–50-year-olds; Many do not grow out of it as our grandmothers might have told us.

Because acne is so impactful on a young person's self-confidence, I would address this condition as soon as possible.

Acne prevalence varies greatly worldwide, with higher rates in developed countries than in developing countries. Research in the US has shown that 85% of people between the ages of 12 and 24 years of age have acne, and while it is most common in teenagers, it affects 8% of adults aged 25 to 34 years and 3% of adults aged 35 to 44 years.

One of the most common conditions in pre-teens and early adulthood is acne, which occurs when your hair follicles.

become plugged with oil and dead skin cells. It causes whiteheads, blackheads or pimples. Acne is most common among teenagers, though it affects people of all ages. It is clinically characterized by comedones, papules, pustules, nodules, cysts, and/or scarring, primarily on the face and trunk. The severity of the disease ranges from mild comedonal acne to severe nodulocystic acne, which can be permanently disfiguring. In addition to physical lesions, acne can have a profound psychological and social impact on patients, particularly teens.

Polygenic and multifactorial (genetically too small to be observed but acting with other factors becomes apparent), acne has four main pathogenetic factors (bacterial, viral or other microorganisms) that contribute to the condition (medically speaking):

- Sebaceous gland hyperplasia and excess sebum production, i.e., sebaceous follicle size and number of lobules per gland are increased in patients with acne. Androgens stimulate sebaceous glands to enlarge and produce more sebum, a process that is most prominent during puberty.
- Abnormal follicular differentiation: In normal follicles, keratinocytes are shed into single cells into the lumen and then excreted. In acne, ke-

ratinocytes are retained and accumulate due to their increased cohesiveness.

- *Cutibacterium (Propionibacterium) acnes* colonization: These gram-positive, nonmotile rods are found deep in follicles and stimulate the production of proinflammatory mediators and lipases. While there may be increased numbers of *C acne* in acne, bacterial counts often do not correlate with acne severity.
- Inflammation and immune response: inflammatory cells and mediators' efflux into the disrupted follicle, leading to the development of papules, pustules, nodules, and cysts.
- External factors may exacerbate acne, including mechanical trauma, cosmetics, topical corticosteroids, and oral medications (for example: corticosteroids, iodides, some antiepileptic drugs). Endocrine disorders and gynecological disorders such as PCOS (polycystic ovarian syndrome) also predispose patients to developing acne.
- Diet: Studies indicate that consuming certain foods — including carbohydrate-rich foods like bread, bagels and chips — may worsen acne. Further study is needed to examine whether people with acne would benefit from following specific dietary restrictions.

There are many acne grading/classifying systems that are commonly accepted throughout the medical community. Most employ type or severity:

- type (comedonal/papular, pustular/nodulocystic), or
- severity (mild/moderate/moderately severe/very severe).

Skin lesions can be described as noninflammatory (comedones) or inflammatory (papules, pustules, nodules, and cysts). Comedones and inflammatory lesions are usually considered separately.

Treatment Options

There are several treatments and aesthetic procedures for acne conditions, and they can be classified as either topical or oral medication.

Topical treatments

Topical antibiotics are one of the first lines of treatment steps that can be started for acne. You can also add other modalities such as a series of glycolic peels. The chemical peels and salicylic acid are favored among teens and young adults (present in most OTC acne medications but check the label) as these treatments are non-invasive.

Salicylic acid may help prevent plugged hair follicles and is available as both wash-off and leave-on products. Studies showing its effectiveness are limited. Side effects include skin discoloration and minor skin irritation. Dapsone (Aczone) 5% gel twice daily is recommended for inflammatory acne, especially in women with acne. Side effects of Dapsone use include redness and dryness.

The most common topical **prescription** medications for acne are:

- **Retinoids and retinoid-like drugs.** Drugs that contain retinoic acids or tretinoin are often useful for moderate acne. These come as creams, gels, and lotions. Examples include tretinoin (Avita, Retin-A, others), adapalene (Differin) and tazarotene (Tazorac, Avage, others). You apply this medication in the evening, beginning with three times a week, then daily as your skin becomes used to it. It prevents the plugging of hair follicles. Do not apply tretinoin at the same time as benzoyl peroxide.

Topical retinoids increase your skin's sun sensitivity. They can also cause dry skin and redness, especially in people with brown or Black skin. Adapalene may be tolerated best.

- **Antibiotics.** These work by killing excess skin bacteria and reducing redness and inflammation. For the first few months of treatment, you may use both a retinoid and an antibiotic, with the antibiotic applied in the morning and the retinoid in the evening. The antibiotics are often combined with benzoyl peroxide to reduce the likelihood of developing antibiotic resistance. Examples include clindamycin with benzoyl peroxide (Benzaclin, Duac, others) and erythromycin with benzoyl peroxide (Benzamycin). Topical antibiotics alone aren't recommended.
- **Azelaic acid and salicylic acid.** Azelaic acid is a naturally occurring acid produced by yeast. It has antibacterial properties. A 20% azelaic acid cream or gel seems as effective as many conventional acne treatments when used twice daily. Prescription azelaic acid (Azelex, Finacea) is an option during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. It can also be used to manage discoloration that occurs with some types of acne. Side effects include skin redness and minor skin irritation.

Evidence is not strong in support of using zinc, sulfur, nicotinamide, resorcinol, sulfacetamide sodium or aluminum chloride in topical treatments for acne.

Oral Medications

- **Antibiotics.** You may need oral antibiotics to reduce bacteria for moderate to severe acne. Usually, the first choice for treating acne is a tetracycline (minocycline, doxycycline) or a macrolide (erythromycin, azithromycin). A macrolide might be an option for people who can't take tetracyclines, including pregnant women and children under 8 years old.

Oral antibiotics should be used for the shortest time possible to prevent antibiotic resistance. And they should be combined.

with other drugs, such as benzoyl peroxide, to reduce the risk of developing antibiotic resistance.

Severe side effects from the use of antibiotics to treat acne are uncommon. These drugs do increase your skin's sun sensitivity though.

- **Combined oral contraceptives.** Four combined oral contraceptives are approved by the FDA for acne therapy in women who also wish to use them for contraception. They are products that combine progestin and estrogen (Ortho Tri-Cyclen 21, Yaz, others). You may not see the benefit of this treatment for a few months, so using other acne medications with it for the first few weeks may help.

Common side effects of combined oral contraceptives are weight gain, breast tenderness and nausea. These drugs are also associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular problems, breast cancer and cervical cancer.

- **Anti-androgen agents.** The drug spironolactone (Aldactone) may be considered for women and adolescent girls if oral antibiotics aren't helping. It works by blocking the effect of androgen hormones on the oil-producing glands. Possible side effects include breast tenderness and painful periods.
- **Isotretinoin.** Isotretinoin (Amnesteem, Claravis, and others) is a derivative of vitamin A. It may be prescribed for people whose moderate or severe acne hasn't responded to other treatments.

Potential side effects of oral isotretinoin include inflammatory bowel disease, depression, and severe birth defects. All people receiving isotretinoin must participate in an FDA-approved.

risk management program as well as see their doctor regularly to monitor for side effects.

Therapies

I recommend combining one or more of the following therapies with medications.

- **Light therapy.** A variety of light-based therapies have been tried with some success (LED, intense pulsed light, or IPL). Most will require multiple visits to your doctor's office. These therapies have been shown to help with reduction as well as improve skin texture and discoloration.
- **Chemical peel.** This procedure uses repeated applications of a chemical solution, such as salicylic acid, glycolic acid, or retinoic acid. This treatment is for mild acne. It might improve the appearance of the skin, though the change is not long-lasting and repeat treatments are usually needed.
- **Drainage and extraction.** Your doctor may use special tools to gently remove whiteheads, blackheads, or cysts that haven't cleared up with topical medications. This technique temporarily improves the appearance of your skin, but it might also cause scarring.
- **Steroid injection.** Nodular and cystic lesions can be treated by injecting a steroid drug into them. This therapy has resulted in rapid improvement and decreased pain. Side effects

may include skin thinning and discoloration in the treated area.

- **Fillers.** Bellafill® is the only long-term filler that's FDA-approved to treat distensible acne scars for up to one year. In just one office visit, you can safely treat your acne scars.

It has been suggested that patients with moderate to severe acne have poor body image and low self-esteem and experience social isolation and constriction of activities. As part of the emotional impact, **increased levels of anxiety, anger, depression, and frustration** have been observed in adolescents with acne.

My daughter began experiencing acne as a 13-year-old and it continued until she was 15. She was very depressed, and it tremendously affected her self-confidence. As her mom and as an aesthetic practitioner, we worked with topicals and other modalities, and her skin has improved immensely. I can't stress enough how important it is for your teenager to know that treatments are available and that you are willing to find what works for him/her.



Acne scarring treatment with Bellafill.

Excessive Sweating

Hyperhidrosis: Abnormally excessive sweating involving the extremities, underarms, and face, usually unrelated to body temperature or exercise.

Excessive sweating can be a psychologically devastating experience for teens, especially for girls. While young men who sweat a lot may be perceived as athletic, work-out buffs, or some other equally positive adjective, sweaty girls are perceived as simply “dirty”.

A little about this condition:

The main symptom of hyperhidrosis is heavy sweating. This goes beyond sweating from being in a hot environment, exercising, or feeling anxious or stressed. The type of hyperhidrosis that usually affects the hands, feet, underarms, or face causes at least one episode a week when you're awake. And sweating usually happens on both sides of the body. (Ask Mayo Expert, 2021)

When to see a doctor

Sometimes excessive sweating is a sign of a serious condition.

Seek immediate medical attention if you have heavy sweating with dizziness, pain in the chest, throat, jaw, arms, shoulders or throat, or cold skin and a rapid pulse.

See your health care provider if:

- Sweating disrupts your daily routine.
- Sweating causes emotional distress or social withdrawal
- You suddenly begin to sweat more than usual.
- You experience night sweats for no apparent reason (Ask Mayo Expert, 2021)

Chapter

TWO

*The Damaging
Effects of Sunburn*

Though not one of the age groups that I cover in this book, sunburn (and its damaging effects) warrants its own place.

While I recommend the use of sunscreen for all age groups, this practice should begin during the ten years. It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of adding this one ingredient to a daily skin care regimen as it not only develops good skin care habits but can profoundly impact the condition of one's skin in later years and may prevent a host of other problems. This is particularly true if your teen is the outdoors type or an athlete.

Sunburn is caused by too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light. UV light may be from the sun or artificial sources such as heat lamps or tanning beds. UVA is the wavelength of light that can penetrate the deeper layers of skin and lead to skin damage over time.

UVB is the wavelength of light that penetrates the skin more superficially and causes sunburn.

UV light damages skin cells. The immune system reacts by increasing blood flow to the affected areas, which causes inflamed skin (erythema), known as sunburn. You can get sunburned on cool or cloudy days. Surfaces such as snow, sand and water can re-

flect UV rays and burn skin too (Ask Mayo Clinic, 2021).

Sunburn Symptoms

Sunburn symptoms can include:

- Inflamed skin, which looks pink or red on white skin and may be harder to see on brown or black skin.
- Skin that feels warm or hot to the touch
- Pain, tenderness, and itching
- Swelling
- Small, fluid-filled blisters, which may break.
- Headache, fever, nausea, and fatigue, if the sunburn is severe.
- Eyes that feel painful or gritty

Intense, repeated sun exposure that results in sunburn increases your risk of other skin damage and certain diseases. These include premature aging of the skin (photoaging), precancerous skin lesions and skin cancer.

Premature aging of your skin

Sun exposure and repeated sunburns speed up the skin's aging process. Skin changes caused by UV

light are called photoaging. The results of photoaging include:

- Weakening of connective tissues, which reduces the skin's strength and elasticity.
- Deep wrinkles
- Dry, rough skin
- Fine red veins on the cheeks, nose and ears
- Freckles, mostly on the face and shoulders
- Dark or discolored spots (macules) on the face, back of hands, arms, chest and upper back — also called solar lentigines (len-TIJ-ih-neeZ)

Precancerous skin lesions

Precancerous skin lesions are rough, scaly patches in areas that have been damaged by the sun. They're often found on the sun-exposed areas of the head, face, neck and hands of people whose skin burns easily in the sun. These patches can evolve into skin cancer. They're also called actinic keratoses (ak-TIN-ik ker-uh-TOE-seeZ) and solar keratoses.

Skin cancer

Excessive sun exposure, even without sunburn, increases your risk of skin cancer, such as melanoma. It can damage the DNA of skin cells. Sunburns in

childhood and adolescence may increase the risk of melanoma later in life.

Skin cancer develops mainly in areas of the body most exposed to sunlight, including the scalp, face, lips, ears, neck, chest, arms, hands, legs and back.

Some types of skin cancer appear as a small growth or a sore that bleeds easily, crusts over, heals and then reopens. With melanoma, an existing mole may change, or a new, suspicious-looking mole may grow.

See your health care provider if you notice:

- A new skin growth
- A bothersome change in your skin
- A change in the look or texture of a mole
- A sore that doesn't heal

Eye damage

Too much UV light damages the cornea. Sun damage to the lens can lead to clouding of the lens (cataracts). Sunburned eyes may feel painful or gritty. Sunburn of the cornea is also called snow blindness. This type of damage might be caused by the sun, welding, tanning lamps and broken mercury vapor lamps.

Sunburn Prevention

Use these methods to prevent sunburn, even on cool, cloudy or hazy days. Sun exposure on cloudy days decreased by about 20%. Be extra careful around water, snow, concrete and sand because they reflect the sun's rays. In addition, UV light is more intense at high altitudes.

1. **Avoid sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.** The sun's rays are strongest during these hours, so try to schedule outdoor activities for other times. If you can't do that, limit the time you're in the sun. Seek shade when possible.
 - **Avoid sun tanning and tanning beds.** Getting a base tan doesn't decrease your risk of sunburn. If you use a self-tanning product to look tanned, also apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
 - **Use sunscreen often and generously.** Use water-resistant, broad-spectrum lip balm and sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30, even on cloudy days. Broad-spectrum products offer protection against ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. SPF 30 blocks 97% of UVB rays. No sunscreen can block 100% of the sun's UVB rays.

- **Cover up.** Other items, such as umbrellas or wide-brimmed hats, can offer protection in addition to sunscreen when outside. Dark clothing with tight weave offers more protection. Consider using outdoor gear specially designed to provide sun protection. Check the label for its ultraviolet protection factor (UPF), which tells how well a fabric blocks sunlight. The higher the UPF number, the better.
- **Wear sunglasses when outdoors.** Choose sunglasses with UVA and UVB protection. Check the UV rating on the label when buying new glasses. Darker lenses don't always mean better UV protection. It also helps to wear sunglasses that fit close to your face or have wraparound frames.
- Be aware of sun-sensitizing medications and cosmetics. Some common prescription and nonprescription drugs can make skin more sensitive to sunlight. Examples include antibiotics, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin IB, others) and cholesterol-lowering drugs. Talk with your pharmacist or health care provider about the side effects of the drugs you take. Cosmetics that contain alpha-hydroxy acids also increase sun sensitivity. (Ask Mayo Expert, 2021)

The Secrets to Looking your Best at Any Age

*“Believe me, if I looked as good,
it’s not by accident.”*

-----**Nora Ephron**

(Glamour, September 2012)

Chapter
THREE

*Finding My
Footing*

When we leave our 20s behind, we are typically “finding our footing” career and relationship-wise. Most women (and men) either have already chosen a career path or are working on it. I must stress here that taking care of our appearance is as important as ever – perhaps more so. Remember the *halo effect*?

And to avoid readers perceiving this as shallow, we must also keep in mind that the techniques put forth throughout this book are also meant to help us stay strong and physically healthy; we often remain attractive AND healthy by avoiding many of the pitfalls discussed.

We have discussed taking care of our skin from our teen years forward, but why? Do I *really* need to continue moisturizing my skin? Absolutely! Cell turnover begins to slow down in our 30s and our skin recovers more slowly and less easily from inflammation of any kind.

Cell Turnover: the continuous process of shedding dead skin cells and subsequently replacing them with younger cells.

This process is highly impacted by the skin care habits formed earlier in life and can produce either beautiful skin or sallow, wrinkled, leathery skin.

Ideally, cell turnover produces healthy skin because the process makes skin firmer and gets rid of fine lines and wrinkles more quickly.

Important proteins such as collagen and elastin breakdown faster while less is generated during these decades of life. The naturally occurring skin-plumping sugar known as hyaluronic acid begins to decrease, resulting in forehead wrinkles, crow’s feet and undereye bags. We lose 1% to 2% of collagen every year beginning around age 25.

Collagen: the main structural protein found in skin and other connective tissues, widely used in purified form for cosmetic surgical treatments (Oxford Dictionary).

Collagen is the most abundant protein found in the human body, supporting the tissue matrix of our skin. It supports and strengthens our bones, hair, joints, and even our fingernails. This necessary protein functions much like the structural framework of a house – without the frame, the house will crumble. Collagen not only anchors cells to each other (like cement or glue), but it also forms sturdy fibril strands (slender fibers) that serve as supporting structures for the skin, bones, connective tissues and more.

Losing collagen is a natural occurrence of aging. During the 30s and 40s, we see loss of elasticity, volume loss, and texture and tone begin to degrade. Lines and wrinkles begin to appear. Some of my clients have said to me, “I do not want to look like my mother, her face is full of lines.”

For those who are curious, there are two types of wrinkles: dynamic and static. Dynamic wrinkles are visible during facial expressions like laughing, smiling, or squinting. Static wrinkles are always present, etched in the skin over time.

I have noticed, post-COVID-19, that this age group has more static wrinkles than I have seen in the past.

There are 28 types of collagens but for the purposes of this book, we will list the 5 most common types.

Type I: The most abundant collagen in our body (over 90%) and stronger than steel by weight. It is found in skin, hair, nails, muscle, joints, and organs.

Type II: The collagen that makes up our movable joints.

Type III: (‘baby collagen’) is the second most abundant collagen in human tissue.

Type IV: Collagen that forms basal lamina (the “basement” membrane”) that lines most human tissue and separates different types of cells.

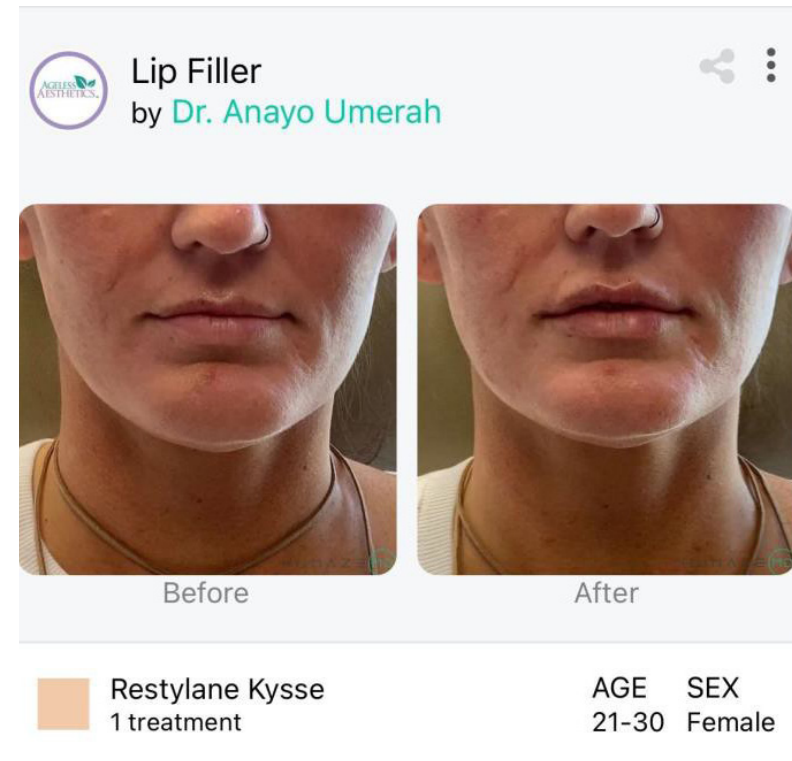
Type V: Collagen that is present in cell surfaces, hair, and the placenta.

Loss of collagen begins at around age 25 but this loss doesn’t become obvious (visible) until we reach our 30s and 40s. Early signs of aging can begin during these decades if we have not taken care of our skin. We can also experience (commonly) hyperpigmentation when the skin produces too much melanin, resulting in freckles, age spots, or larger patches of darkened skin.

With decreasing levels of collagen production, skin becomes looser (less tight) and thinner, resulting in more visible blood vessels and discoloration, particularly around the eyes. Beginning around the age of 30 – 35 years, our bodies lose approximately 5cc’s of fat from our faces every year – imagine the volume loss by the time you get to your 60s and the resulting appearance!

Lip augmentation (think Kim Kardashian) is desired by many in this age group. If this is something you are interested in, my advice would be to keep it more natural looking and as close to your natural appearance as possible. We have all seen the horror

photos of cosmetic procedures gone wrong – it's not an pretty sight and is very difficult (sometimes impossible) to repair to a natural-looking appearance. Less is better!





I recommend that everyone begin addressing issues of elasticity, lines, and wrinkles in the 30s and 40s and moving forward as a part of one's daily beauty regimen.

Treatment Options

So, what can I do? I recommend addressing lines and wrinkles at their first appearance. Loss of fat, texture, skin tone and elasticity, and even bone density loss begin during these two decades and the sooner it's addressed, the better (easier and less expensive, too).

Botox

Everyone has heard of Botox, but what is it, really? Botox is a drug prepared from the bacterial toxin botulin, used medically to treat certain muscular conditions and cosmetically to remove or prevent wrinkles by temporarily paralyzing facial muscles. This paralyzing of the facial muscles prevents the constant contracting that causes wrinkles and lines to appear.



Botox works well for dynamic wrinkles, but static wrinkles (permanent ones) will need a combination of Botox and fillers. One can also consider pharmaceutical-grade skin care lines as well; be sure to do your research to make sure you are purchasing a product that will actually help.

Botox treatment, before and 2 weeks after to the forehead lines

Botox is administered either Intramuscular (into the muscle), subcutaneous (under the skin), or intradermal (between the layers of the skin).

Botox and other similar treatments such as Dysport and Jeuveau, Xeomin are neuromodulators. A neuromodulator is a messenger released from a neuron that affects the transmission of the signals between neurons.

How often should I get Botox injections?

Neuromodulators should be injected every three to four months. Fillers, depending on the type, can last from 6 months up to 5 years depending on the type.

Another option is ablative and non-ablative laser resurfacing, also known as laser treatments (depending on your skin type and ethnicity). During laser treatment, an intense beam of light energy (laser) is directed at your skin. The laser beam removes the thin outer layer of skin (epidermis), which stimulates collagen growth. As the skin heals and regrows, the treated area will appear smoother and tighter. Types of ablative lasers include the Carbon dioxide laser (CO₂), Erbium laser and combination and combination systems.

Non-ablative lasers also stimulate collagen growth as well. It is a less aggressive approach and has a shorter recovery time.

Other alternatives include IPL treatments (Intense Pulsed Light Therapy) or photofacials to improve the color and texture of your skin without surgery.



Before and after 3 series of IPL treatments. With no downtime, you can return to work on same day.

Why it's done.

- Fine and deep wrinkles
- Age spots
- Uneven skin tone and texture
- Sun damaged skin
- Mild to moderate acne scars

Risks

Laser resurfacing can cause side effects. Side effects are milder and less likely with non-ablative approaches than with ablative laser resurfacing.

- **Redness, swelling, itching and pain.** Treated skin may swell, itch or have a burning sensation. Redness may be intense and might last for several months.
- **Acne.** Applying thick creams and bandages to your face after treatment can worsen acne or cause you to temporarily develop tiny white bumps (milia) on the treated skin.
- **Infection.** Laser resurfacing can lead to bacterial, viral or fungal infection. The most common infection is a flare-up of the herpes virus — the virus that causes cold sores. In most cases, the herpes virus is already present but dormant in the skin.
- **Changes in skin color.** Laser resurfacing can cause treated skin to become darker than

it was before treatment (hyperpigmentation) or lighter (hypopigmentation). Permanent changes in skin color are more common in people with dark brown or Black skin. Talk with your doctor about which laser resurfacing technique reduces this risk.

- **Scarring.** Ablative laser resurfacing poses a slight risk of scarring.

Laser resurfacing isn't for everyone. Your doctor might caution against laser resurfacing if you:

- Have a connective tissue or autoimmune disease or a weak immune system.
- Have a history of keloid scars.
- Have had radiation therapy on the face.
- Are prone to cold sores or have had a recent outbreak of cold sores or herpes virus.
- Have darker brown or black skin or are very tanned.
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Have a history of an outward-turning eyelid (ectropion).

Hydrafacials and oxygen facial. These options work best with all skin types of Fitzpatrick 1-6.

What is a Hydrafacial? A hydrafacial is **one of the most powerful, non-invasive skin re-**

surfacing treatments available today. It combines cleansing, exfoliation, extraction, hydration and antioxidant protection that removes dead skin cells and impurities while simultaneously delivering moisturizing serums into the skin.

What is an Oxygen facial?

Oxygen facials help improve blood circulation to the face, which can help the skin look bright and plump. Oxygen is well known to promote wound healing, thereby giving a more radiant skin. How often should you get an oxygen facial?

For the best results, I recommend getting **one treatment every 1- 2 weeks for 6 sessions, followed by one every 4-6 weeks for maintenance.** The Oxygen Facial is also an ideal treatment 1-3 days before a big event because it hydrates and primes the skin for even makeup application.

The Fitzpatrick scale has six main skin types based on the color of the skin and its reaction to sun exposure.

Type 1: always burns, never tans – often has red or strawberry blonde hair, freckles and blue/green or pale-colored eyes.

Type 2: usually burns and tans minimally – usually has fair skin, hair, and pale eyes.

Type 3: sometimes burns mildly but tans uniformly.

Type 4: burns minimally and tans easily – usually olive skin tones.

Type 5: rarely burns and tans profusely – usually dark hair and dark eyes.

Type 6: never burns and tans profusely.

Another modality that can address texture is micro-needling with radiofrequency energy. Micro-needling is a process by which a healthcare provider uses thin needles to make tiny holes in the top layer of your skin. The damage helps stimulate your skin's healing process, so it produces more collagen and elastin. These proteins keep your skin firm and smooth and actually help to improve elasticity, tighten the skin, and aid with discoloration.

All of the previous alternatives will help avoid the inevitable – a facelift.

Skin care

When thinking seriously about your skin care, you may also look into vampire facials or micro-needling with PRP in which your own blood is used to beautify your face. Adding Vitamin C, retinol, and a growth factor to your skin care routine is

imperative for optimal anti-aging skin regimen especially getting into our 40's and 50's.

Growth Factors

What are growth factors? Understanding growth factors is essential if one is to understand their role in ageless beauty. Therefore, bear with me for some medical (college knowledge) information.

Growth factors are signaling proteins that are naturally occurring in everyone's bodies. These proteins stimulate cell proliferation (growth), wound healing, inflammation and tissue repair, and occasionally, cellular differentiation (when young, unspecialized cells become mature and take on specialized duties). Growth factors are important for regulating a variety of cellular processes, signaling cells to mature and do what they are intended to do.

Some examples of growth factors include cytokines (secreted by the immune system); hormones; EGF (epidermal growth factor); Osteogenic growth factor (critical for bone formation during development, fracture repair, and tissue maintenance; fibroblast growth factor (potent regulators of cell proliferation and differentiation); and vascular endothelial growth factors (blood and lymph nodes).

In short, growth factors are essential, natural proteins in our bodies that promote the growth, organization and maintenance of cells and tissues, including the skin.

A patient in her 40s came to me for help with her facial appearance. She appeared very old, with significant wrinkles and was worried because she had an important job interview coming up. Her self-confidence was very low as she was competing with younger candidates for the position.

We administered some Botox and fillers to her cheeks and added a little to augment her lips. I started her on a good skin care regimen that included growth factors and retinol; did some needling to resurface her skin. Much of this was needed to repair a couple of decades of very little skin care, but we were both very pleased – these “fixes” took 20 years off her age. Her self-confidence was off the charts, and she landed the job!

Skin care is so very important for this age group; I cannot stress it enough.

Chapter
FOUR

I Have Arrived

“

*“You are altogether Beautiful my Darling,
there is no flaw in You”*

-----Song of songs 4:7

Once you've left your 30s behind, it is crucial that you begin seeing an aesthetic practitioner if you haven't already. If this is your first foray into caring for your skin and overall appearance, you can gain a good deal of critical information in this chapter.

The 40s and 50s age groups begin to see issues that younger clients are not experiencing yet. Age spots, also called sun spots or liver spots, begin to appear. These are caused by skin aging, years of exposure to the sun, or exposure to UV light (tanning beds). They can also be hereditary, so if you saw them on your mother's or grandmother's hands or arms, you're more likely to develop them as well. Age spots are caused by an excess production of melanin or pigment.

Other areas of concern when we reach our 40s and 50s include:

- Gaunt hands.
- Inflammation or hyperpigmentation along chest.
- Dry or itchy skin.
- Wrinkles or sagging.
- Hair loss.

Once we reach these mature decades of life, we should be doing everything that the younger age groups are doing. Your budget should now include visits to your practitioner at least every 1-3 months for checkups and maintenance.

Once we reach this age, we begin to see the *inverted triangle* of beauty or the upside-down triangle. The Triangle of Beauty is the natural, youthful appearance of the face – wider forehead and eye area, narrower jawline and neck area. The triangle of youth becomes inverted due to the natural aging process as our skin begins to sag, and our face loses volume.



The most common complaints I see in my office are undereye bags, jowls becoming more pronounced, double chins, saggy skin, and platysma bands (two strips of muscle that run vertically down both sides of the neck). Platysma bands can cause a double chin, neck creases and a “turkey neck.”

If a client has been doing all the care and maintenance on her facial appearance and neglecting the neck area, this is cause for concern – you will still not be aesthetically appealing.

If you are reading this book and are in this age group, particularly if you’ve never taken care of your skin or body appearance, **DO NOT FRET!** It is never too late to take care of yourself, and I encourage you to read on and contact me (if you’re local) or an aesthetic practitioner near you.

Another concern for the 40s and 50s age group is the onset of the perimenopausal era (the years shortly before menopause or cessation of periods).

Perimenopausal symptoms include mood swings, weight gain, insomnia, hot flashes, and increased abdominal girth (belly fat). No amount of time in the gym can change this normal part of aging, but we can all do things to slow the process and to help ourselves look and feel better.

During perimenopause, periods become irregular or heavier than usual and the structural parts of our bodies change drastically. We can and do experience vaginal atrophy. The lining of the vagina begins thinning due to imbalances in hormones, especially the loss of estrogen and testosterone. This thinning leads to loss of libido (low or no sex drive), genital pain that occurs just before, during or after sexual intercourse (dyspareunia). Vaginal flora can lead to recurring bacterial vaginosis, or yeast infection.

If you are in this age group and are experiencing any of the above symptoms, it can feel very lonely. Who wants to discuss these issues with a doctor, even a female one, or a nurse practitioner? It’s awkward and embarrassing! But be encouraged – you are not alone! These are very common conditions and there are treatments available to help with the causes and symptoms.

I cannot speak for other doctors, but I prefer addressing these issues from different angles and I have found that this method produces better results.

Let’s start with the eyes. Drooping eyelids and bulging of the fat pads under the eyes is a frequent complaint. I use Agnes RF, an innovative skin tightening treatment that uses radiofrequency en-

ergy-enabled microneedles to boost collagen production and provide natural-looking results. These precision needles bypass the need for going under the knife; thus, it is a much less invasive procedure. The process melts the fat and tightens the skin at the same time and can be used on the upper and lower eyes, fine lines and static wrinkles, sculpting of the jawline and for de-bulking double chins and saggy jowls.

You can now do deep resurfacing with a fractional laser or laser peel, tightening the skin.

You may also elect to have a fat transfer done. More common than you may think, transferring fat from the thighs or buttocks (or any other part of the body) by removing it with liposuction and then inserting it into the face as a filler works very well. I can inject 3-3ccs of filler into the face and the result is always amazing! As a more natural approach, this procedure reduces saggy skin and old-looking wrinkles and can take years off your appearance.

For those who found the topic of vaginal dryness and atrophy relevant to you but incredibly embarrassing, chins up! There is help to be had. Overcome those awkward feelings and talk with your aesthetic practitioner about Vaginal Revitalization or Rejuvenation. The term covers any procedure

(both internal and external) that changes the vagina. This can include treatments for vaginal dryness, tightening of the vaginal canal, urinary incontinence, low sex drive, or even a surgical labiaplasty to change the appearance of the labia.

In my practice, we use Votiva, a non-invasive radiofrequency procedure that addresses both internal and external vaginal issues. This 15-minute technique inserts energy waves with a probe to increase blood flow to the epithelial cells, increasing lubrication and libido (sex drive) and even helps with recurrent bacterial vaginosis (yeast infections).

Women lose estrogen and testosterone during menopause and just aren't as sexual as before. This can be devastating to women, who see that men are fecund (able to produce sperm/children) until the day they die while they seem to dry up and wither away.

DO NOT SUFFER ALONE! Do your Google research, talk to a trusted healthcare provider, find a provider near you who offers vaginal revitalization. Becoming a lover of sex again has saved many marriages for many women I have encountered. They say they wish they had done it sooner!

P.S. Won't he be surprised?

Chapter
FIVE

Maintenance is Key

“

“He has made Everything Beautiful in its Time”

-----Ecclesiastes3:11

When we get to our 50s and 60s, maintenance is the key. If you are considering skin and body care for the first time, don't despair – it's never too late!

What is the percentage of individuals in this age group who seek treatment?

For people in their 50s, 60s, and beyond, only about 30% see an aesthetics practitioner, even if they have been maintaining their skin and bodies up to this point in life. For some reason, when a woman reaches menopause, she feels like her life has ended when nothing could be further from the truth.

Let's briefly revisit the "angel halo." Remember this? I would say to you that the media has perpetuated this concept that unless a woman is young, slim and wrinkle-free, she is not beautiful. I challenge you to reveal this ugly belief for exactly what it is – FALSE! I, personally, do not perceive beauty in this way. A woman can be beautiful AT ANY AGE, just as men can be handsome and distinguished with a head full of gray hair. Of course, maintaining a youthful appearance is desirable, so we pull out all the stops when we get older and say, "wait a minute, I can be beautiful at any age!" This

is why it's so important to maintain the things that have kept your body and skin healthy and beautiful. Why in the world would we stop because we reached menopause? Medical advances, particularly in the aesthetics field, have declared – 70 is the new 50!

So, what can I expect to see when I am post-menopausal and now in my golden years?

We now begin seeing thinning of the hair, something that may have been a concern at an earlier age but has now become very visible. The term for this is alopecia and it's much more common in men.

If you are experiencing thinning hair or are beginning to see lots more hair in your hairbrush than before, there are treatment options. I use Keravive, which is like a Hydrafacial for the scalp. It's a way to add hydration (water) and peptides to the scalp and it's a very relaxing procedure. We can also provide PRP (Platelet Rich Plasma) injections into the scalp.

Blood contains three parts: red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets. The platelets are isolated, activated for the growth factors contained within

it, and then re-injected back into the body, in this case, the scalp.

As with the earlier decades of life, neurotoxin injections can make a big difference when we are facing wrinkles, saggy skin and loss of muscle tone.

There are currently four neurotoxin products on the market: Botox, Jeuveau, Dysport, and Xeomin. In cosmetic applications, these are injections performed by medical professionals to relax the muscles that cause unwanted wrinkles and seemingly permanent facial expressions.

Surprising Uses for Botox

- Chronic migraines (FDA approved).
- Excessive underarm sweating (FDA approved).
- Overactive bladder (FDA approved).
- Crossed eyes (FDA approved).
- Muscle spasticity in the upper limbs (FDA approved in 2010).
- Depression (not FDA approved).
- TMJ treatment (not FDA approved).
- Severely cold hands (not FDA approved).

There are several facial fillers in the market, including:

- Hyaluronic acid (Restylane, Juvederm, others).
- Calcium hydroxyapatite (Radiesse).
- Fat grafting.
- Permanent soft tissue filler (Bellafill).
- Poly-L-lactic acid (Sculptra).

Hyaluronic acid (Restylane, Juvederm, others). This natural component of the skin's connective tissue is the most common filler used for wrinkles. The results typically last 6 to 12 months.

Calcium hydroxyapatite (Radiesse). This filler is used to contour the jawline, restore volume in the cheeks, and treat deeper wrinkles and skin folds. The results last up to a year when used for contouring and 3 years when used to fill wrinkles.

Fat grafting. With this method, fat is removed from the lower abdomen or other areas through liposuction. It is then injected into the cheek, temple, lips, or forehead through small incisions. The effects might be permanent. But achieving the desired results usually requires more than one session as well as overfilling the site because the body reabsorbs some of the fat.

Permanent soft tissue filler (Bellafill). This filler is used to smooth deep wrinkles around the mouth. The body can't absorb this type of filler, so

it doesn't require reinjection. Permanent soft tissue filler generally isn't recommended as a first-time facial filler treatment.

Poly-L-lactic acid (Sculptra). This product is used to restore facial volume lost due to aging or illness. Two or three sessions are usually required. The effects last up to two years.

Risks

As with any procedure, injecting facial filler for wrinkles has risks, including:

- Allergic reaction at the injection site or throughout the body
- Swelling and inflammation
- Changes in skin color (post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation) on brown or Black skin
- Mild pain
- Bleeding or bruising at the injection site
- Infection
- Scarring
- Irregularities in the surface, contours and firmness of the skin
- Blood vessel damage (rarely)

Some other popular off-label uses for dermal fillers include adding volume to earlobes, liquid rhinoplasties, and treating knee and elbow wrinkles. These uses are beyond the scope of this book.

Other aesthetic procedures

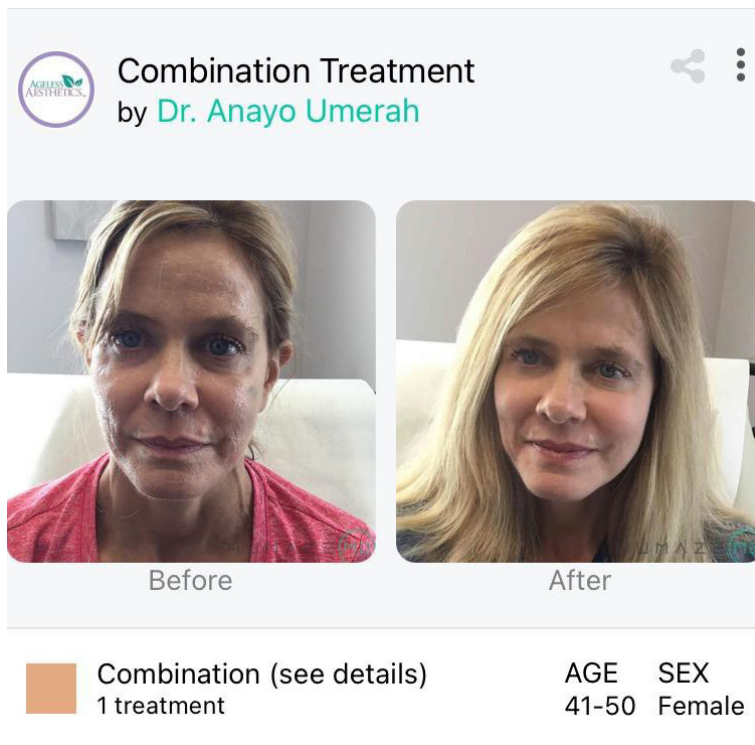
PDO Thread Lifts

PDO thread lifts have become very popular in recent years. This procedure is a non-surgical facelift in which facial skin is lifted and tightened using Polydioxanone (PDO) threads. These threads are anchored and inserted into different layers of the skin using needles, instantly lifting and tightening sagging skin. Anywhere from 1-15 threads may be used per section of the face being treated.

PDO is a dissolvable suture that can be used to lift saggy skin just as around the jaws (or anywhere else in the body where sagging skin is an issue). The threads dissolve in about 2 months and your natural collagen builds up around it, helping it support the structures wherever it is implanted. PDO threads last for about two years and can be used in combination with fillers, giving a beautiful result. I use it as part of my Ageless Lift/U lift procedure.

“Beauty begins the moment you decide to be yourself”

-----Coco Chanel.



Vampire facelift

Yes, sounds spooky, first, the injector (1) uses HA fillers to create a beautiful shape. (2) Then, the physician isolates growth factors from the patient's blood. (3) When these growth factors enter the face (injected by the physician), then multi-potent stem cells become activated to grow new tissue. This new tissue includes new collagen, new fatty tissue (for smoothness), and new blood vessels (for a healthy glow). You will certainly not resemble a vampire!

Combination Aesthetic treatment

Combination aesthetic treatments can be achieved on the same day. I mean getting your Botox/Dysport PDO thread lift and even a facial prior to your injectable. In the hands of experts, your aesthetic provider can be able to determine which combos are best wright for you.



*Combination therapy with Microneedling with PRP,
Neuromodulators,
(liquid facelift) Same day procedure.*

Can men get any of these procedures?

Absolutely, and they do! With the popularity of online (speed) dating, men want to have that competitive edge when attracting the ladies. More and more men are getting Botox injections and fillers, micro-needling, and PRP facials. In fact, men are quite religious about coming in at the appointed intervals to repeat the procedures, much more so than women.

One of the most sought-after treatments for men is for hair loss. Alopecia can be just as devastating to men as it is to women, and most men will go to any length to combat it.

HRT and BHRT

Men also take advantage of hormone replacement therapy. There are two types available, HRT (hormone replacement therapy, using manufactured hormones from synthetic sources to replace natural ones lost during the aging process) or BHRT (Bioidentical hormone replacement therapy, using hormones derived from natural sources).

For women, HRT helps with a host of issues, such as low sex drive, vaginal itching and burning, night sweats, mood swings, insomnia, hot flashes, hair loss, and urinary problems.

For men, this therapy helps improve energy levels, boost libido and relieve chronic fatigue. It also helps with issues such as mood swings, lack of mental clarity, thinning hair, dryer skin, and difficulty getting and maintaining an erection.

HRT and BHRT comes in the form of pellets. I prefer Bioidentical Hormone Replacement because these pellets are biologically identical to the hormones your body was producing when you were younger, greatly reducing the risk that your body will reject the treatment.

Before receiving hormone replacement therapy, we do a number of tests, such as blood labs and cardiac output. I also ask about what symptoms you are experiencing so that we can ensure that this treatment will work for you. Your dose of replacement hormones is customized and specific to you because no two bodies are exactly alike.

Hormone replacement is also available as a topical cream, but I prefer the pellets because they are inserted into the body and the body takes only what it needs when it needs it. These rice-like pellets are placed in the stomach or hip and this form of therapy can last 5-7 years.

Skin care for men should be basic because you want to keep it simple. I recommend salicylic acid, vitamin C, retinol at night and of course, sunscreen.

*“You do not have to look like someone else to be Beautiful..
You are Beauty by Definition”*

-----**Dr. Anayo Umerah**

FAQ's

Do African Americans get aesthetic treatments?

Absolutely!

You know, they say Black don't Crack, but we do break. So, as an African American woman, I get my Botox twice a year. I got Bellafill filler six years ago and I still make sure my skin stays hydrated with HydraFacial's and Oxygen facials. My skin care is pretty basic – I use a salicylic acid facial wash (to exfoliate) and moisturize because there's nothing worse than drying out your skin, especially on the face.

I'm in my 50s now, so I take my skin care very seriously. I take Vitamin C and use retinol at night. I have also added a growth factor to my regimen called “So Me”. It's PRP (platelet-rich plasma) in a bottle – your PRP is placed in a vial with hyaluronic acid and aloe, and this becomes your per-

sonalized skin care product. It's very popular with celebrities.

Yes – Blacks DO Crack, so any product with a growth factor is good at this age because you are fighting the aging battle of losing the things that your body previously produced that kept you looking younger for so long.

When I was having children, I had a case of melasma, discoloration on the face with skin patches darker than your normal pigmentation. While it can last for years, it more commonly goes away on its own if it was triggered by something like pregnancy or certain types of medication. I used hydroquinone for my case.

I recommend periodic chemical peels to exfoliate (remove dead skin cells) and to refresh the skin. Skin tightening and

Microneedling are also common and work well; both are safe for African American and Fitzpatrick skin types 4-6.



Female, 2 weeks after a chemical peel



Patient in her 60's, with very active lifestyle. She wanted to look her best at any age and still looks like a younger version of herself.

African Americans should be getting aesthetic procedures, including Botox and fillers before it's too late. I acknowledge that with their skin types, it takes longer to show the signs of aging due to the high melanin component, but we still need to care for our skin and bodies. Would you buy an expensive car like a Lamborghini and never take it to the car wash or get it detailed? You certainly wouldn't neglect to change the oil or get regular tune-ups. Our bodies are a gift from God, and we should cherish them and self-love as much as we can.

Conclusion

You can Look Your Best at Any Age! From the preteen years to adulthood to our golden years, we can and should be caring for our skin and bodies.

Most importantly, find an aesthetic provider with credentials who knows what they're doing. There is an artistic component to aesthetics and the best practitioners don't just pump fillers into people's faces upon every request. Go in for a consultation first and discuss the options. Visit more than one practitioner.

There's a big difference between a cook and a chef. Not that there's anything wrong with a cook; a cook uses a cookbook – a chef creates something out of nothing. There is an art to a chef's creations. This is not vanity – looking good and feeling good boosts your mental well-being. This is the positive benefit to beauty. When you look in the mirror and see beauty staring back at you, it boosts your serotonin levels, creating a sense of happiness.

Nothing builds self-confidence like someone telling you that you look 40 when you just turned 60; it puts a real bounce in your step!

*“It’s not the years in your life that count,
it’s your life in your years”*

----Abraham Lincoln

About the Author

Dr. Anayo Umerah, MD, FAAFP, is certified by the American Board of Family Medicine and is a fellow of the American Academy of Anti-Aging, where she completed her fellowship in Aesthetic Medicine. She is one of the leading aesthetic doctors in the US and overseas.

A native of Nigeria, Dr. Anayo (as her friends and colleagues affectionately refer to her) began her medical career there, earning a scholarship in high school to attend medical school, where she graduated top of her class in 1989. She completed her post-graduate studies in Family Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, with a primary focus on general medicine, women’s health, aesthetics, and anti-aging.

When Dr. Anayo visited the United States, she met her future husband, Emeka, who is also a doctor. Emeka proposed to Anayo within two weeks of their first meeting. The couple now has three beautiful children, a son and two daughters.

Dr. Anayo served as Medical Director and Clinical Faculty with the University of Pittsburgh (UP-MC-Mercy) Department of Family Medicine. She also served as the site medical director of Health Associates East in Pittsburgh, a private family practice group. Dr. Anayo held a leadership position with IPC Hospitalist Group in Pennsylvania as well as in Georgia, servicing Navicient Health (formerly The Medical Center) before forming her companies.

Dr. Anayo's dream of capturing and maintaining beauty for her patients was realized when she and her husband formed the Women's Health Institute. She serves as President and CEO of Ageless Aesthetics and Umerah Family Practice, LLC; the couple operates two locations, Macon and Warner Robins, Ga. In 2022, she opened Rivertown Medical and Wellness Center in Columbus, Ga.

Expert in her fields of practice, Dr. Anayo has received numerous awards of recognition, including the My Black is Beautiful Icon Award at the first Phenomenal Women Awards (2016, Atlanta, Ga.); and Honors in the 2019 edition of The Trademark Women of Distinction. She shares and advises on current and trending issues in medicine in the Doctor's Corner, as an advisor for The Middle Georgia Informer newspaper and hosts her radio show, Ageless Beauty Has Arrived in Macon, Ga.

Dr. Anayo has trained other doctors in the fields of medicine and aesthetics.

Dr. Anayo is affiliated with numerous professional and medical organizations, including the American Board of Family Medicine; the American Medical Association; the American Academy of Aesthetics and Anti-Aging Medicine; The Cellular Medicine Association; and the American Institute of Aesthetic Medicine. She has more than 20 years of experience in her portfolio.

Doctor Anayo Umerah has a very passionate approach to the art and beauty of the feminine form. She believes that every woman is beautiful by God's design and that this beauty can be captured by preserving it through advances in science and aesthetic medicine. She enjoys dancing, golfing and cooking and believes the best gift you can give yourself is good health, both inside and out.

“The Feeling of Beauty is the Beginning of Happiness”

-----Dr. Anayo Umerah

Testimonials

I have to say that this has been the best experience I've had when it comes to minimizing/removing scars on my back and face due to acne. At the moment, I have only done 1 hydrofacial session and 3 sessions of the fractoral. For my face I have done the hydrofacial along with 1 session of the fractoral and on my back I have done 1 full fractoral session and 1 fractoral session just targeting the roughest scars. When I tell you that you see results, YOU SEE RESULTS!!

–Amber B.

Dr. Umerah is amazing. I've been going to her for almost 3 years now and all of her services and procedures are expertly delivered. Her professional and courteous staff always make you feel comfortable and at ease.

–Mary Sims

My wife has been a client of Ageless Aesthetics for quite some time, and she always gets first-rate treatment! Dr. Anayo Umerah takes time to consider the best treatments to reach the desired goals. My wife has benefited greatly from her services. She leaves with a refreshed sense of confidence and well-being, knowing that she looks her best helps her feel her best.

–Heather Hamsley

“When people tell you of how beautiful and refreshed you look and not what you have gotten done, then you have the best aesthetic Provider!”

Keep Him or Her!

-----Dr. Anayo Umerah

I love Ageless Aesthetics! They are very professional and genuinely care about their customers. They take their time to help you understand the many different services they provide, and help you decide what is right for you. I'm very happy with my results!

Dr. Umerah and her staff are absolutely a pleasure. Her credentials of 20+ years as a medical doctor and her several years in the aesthetic industry made me feel at ease. Her staff is very sweet and extremely knowledgeable! They truly try to go above and beyond to provide their clients with the best experience possible.

–Todd Daniels

Dr. Umerah and her staff are absolutely a pleasure. Her credentials of 20+ years as a medical doctor and her several years in the aesthetic industry made me feel at ease. Her staff is very sweet and extremely knowledgeable! They truly try to go above and beyond to provide their clients with the best experience possible.

–Andia Davis

Cutting edge skin care... up to date technology ... gorgeous surrounding while being pampered... caring and knowledgeable staff.... I am absolutely thrilled with the results! Looking better is always good for the heart! Dr. Anayo Umerah is the BEST!

–Natacha Billups

Dr. Umerah is the best hands down with injectables!

–Karen Lewis

I have always had great results with any treatment that I have had done by Dr. Umerah or the aestheticians. I have been going for a few years now and look and feel younger than I did in my early 30s!!

–Lauren Antuofermo

I was a client of Dr. Anayo Umerah for more than 13 years, before joining her practice. She is such an asset to Aesthetic medicine & so grateful to have her in Central Georgia!

–Tyler Burns

Dr. Umerah and staff have given me great service for 2 years now. I was getting Hormone replacement therapy in Fla (Univ of Fla team doc). I highly recommend Ageless Aesthetics! Thank all of you and your whole staff!!! Thanks.

–Brett H

Dr. Anayo, along with Dr. Umerah, are the ABSOLUTE BEST Team in middle Georgia! I've been a patient since 2017! I truly thank GOD for both of them! They truly care about their patients. They are both professional and personable. I love them dearly.

–Dianna Cooper

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