



BY ROBIN H. PHILLIPS

BLURRING the LINES

TURNING BACK THE CLOCK: AN AGE-OLD OBSESSION

SOCIETY'S CURRENT OBSESSION with looking young isn't new. Cleopatra used to bathe in soured donkey milk to soften her skin. The Egyptian queen was onto something—the liquid is rich in alpha hydroxy acids which help exfoliate the top layer of skin. There's copious evidence throughout history that both lay people and scientists used ingredients from nature to brighten, tighten, and soften complexions.

In 2018 options for changing how we look are as numerous as they are easy to find—and endure. Dermatologists are the specialists people most often turn to when it comes to skin, hair, and nails, and most now treat patients both medically and cosmetically. Dr. Deanne Mraz Robinson and Dr. Rhonda Klein are two Yale-trained board-certified dermatologists who have studied and built their careers on this blend of medical and cosmetic care treatments. They have recently opened a state-of-the-art practice in Westport—Modern Dermatology (moderndermct.com).

The sleek space, designed by Dana Ferraro of Fairfield's Molly Patton Design, feels more like a luxury spa than a doctor's office. But

dazzling décor aside, these two women are distinguished physicians in their field. Both remain active in academia and clinical research. "I am as comfortable removing skin cancer as I am injecting fillers or neuromodulators into my patients," explains Dr. Robinson. This marriage of medical and cosmetic, at a one-stop destination, is appealing to patients. "I love having them check my skin for any medical issues, but also advising me on things I can do to enhance my appearance and look younger," says one patient.

While this is certainly a popular practice for women, men make up about 25 percent of their patients. Besides seeking out a little "brotox," for frown lines, men often consult the doctors for hair loss. Modern Dermatology offers Platelet Rich Plasma therapy (PRP). "For patients who have not lost their actual hair follicle, PRP can help regrow lost hair, with little pain, and virtually no side effects," says Dr. Klein. The doctor removes a patient's own blood (from an arm) then places it in a sterile tube that is spun down in a centrifuge to separate components of the blood. "The plasma now contains a higher than normal number of platelets that is injected into the scalp where there is hair loss," explains Dr. Robinson.



MODERN DERMATOLOGY'S TOP TIPS FOR SKIN CARE

SUNSCREEN

A daily SPF of 30 and for extended time in the sun (year-round) SPF 45+ applied every two hours.

SELF-EXAMS

Each month give yourself a scan, if you notice something new or changing, see your dermatologist to have it assessed.

WASH YOUR FACE

Even if you brave the day with a makeup free face, it's important to wash. Pores have attracted all sorts of things from the environment and cleansing gives your skin the break it needs to repair while you sleep.

ANTIOXIDANT SERUM

It's *the* multi-tasking product to add to any skin-care routine. Use in the am to protect from environmental toxins and in the pm to repair. PURE BioDerm Antioxidant Super Serum, created by the docs, helps prevent premature signs of aging such as fine lines, wrinkles, and hyperpigmentation from sun and age-related dark spots. PUREBioDerm.com

MOISTURIZE

Applying an oil-free moisturizer to even oily or acne-prone skin signals the body to slow down oil production, and can help balance things out. The docs love Neutrogena HydraBoost (\$19.99), it's oil-free, and uses hyaluronic acid to draw moisture into the skin.

PRICE OF BEAUTY

Among the 15.7 million cosmetic minimally invasive procedures performed in 2017, here are the top five:

- 1** Neurotoxins (like Botox and Dysport)
COST / \$350 and up
- 2** Soft tissue fillers (like Voluma)
COST / \$750 and up
- 3** Chemical peel
COST / \$150 to \$400
- 4** Laser hair removal
COST / \$250 and up
- 5** Microdermabrasion
COST / \$75 to \$200

practice offers everything from facelifts to fillers sees people in their twenties up to age 90. "We live in a world now where social media plays a huge role in how the younger population is perceived and they want to look like their "filtered self," explains Dr. Sofer. "But most people just want a better version of themselves, and we work with them to achieve that."

While some people prefer a medical doctor for cosmetic procedures, others are devoted followers of a "Nurse Injector." Betsy Autry (schedule@beautywithbetsyautry.com), an RN for 23 years, has spent the last five years as an injector working out of a doctor's office. "I love helping people become a better version of themselves," explains Autry. "I try to give you back your 18-year-old lips or forehead or cheeks—or all three," says Autry. In fact, she encourages clients to bring in an old photo so she can help recreate some of the fullness and tightness that age has taken.

Some eschew these interventions. One Fairfielder visits Modern Dermatology for regular skin checks, but nothing more. "I don't judge anyone else for their choices," she says. "But my self-esteem comes from regular exercise, a good diet, and good skincare products. I want to grow old gracefully and celebrate the lines on my face as evidence of a life well-lived."

None of these professionals is in the business of pressuring people into changing the way they look. On the other hand, they all recommend beginning Botox earlier rather than later. "Start in the late twenties or early thirties," says Dr. Robinson. "It's a proactive approach that allows the muscles to stop contracting, making fewer new wrinkles," she explains. With so many options, and so much of it non-invasive and safe, it's no wonder it's more often the norm for people of a certain age. "The bottom line is we want to help patients be healthy but also feel good about themselves," says Dr. Klein. ■

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