

The Latest in the Aesthetic World

By Dr. William Carter

Once or twice a year I have the opportunity to attend a national aesthetic conference. Recently, my wife and I were able to attend the 11th annual South Beach Symposium in Miami Beach. I know, it's rough, right? In any event, it is always with intense interest that I soak up all that I can at these gatherings. So, what's new?

Regarding the problem of hyperpigmentation, topicals have regained the command position over fractionated laser devices for long-term control. All of the following are utilized: hydroquinone in strengths up to 4%, retinoids, azelaic acid, kojic acid, ascorbic acid, ellagic acid, and polypodium leucotomos. Combinations of these work best. As always, physical sun blocks

play a crucial role. Notably, Tri-Luma is back on the market. Pigment-seeking lasers are still important for isolated areas or when a faster solution is needed.

Acne treatment is always of interest. There is a strong trend away from long-term use of oral antibiotics. Of note is the fact that as little as a two-week course of

oral antibiotics can change a person's intestinal flora for as long as a two-year period. Oral doxycycline in a sub-antimicrobial dose of 40 mg/day has significant anti-inflammatory activity and greatly helps with acne control, for example Oracea. The special population subsets of those with polycystic ovary syndrome and peri/post-menopausal acne were discussed. Spironolactone can be helpful in each of these conditions. An underutilized technique known as photodynamic therapy (PDT) is extremely useful in severe adolescent acne cases. This involves four treatments done two weeks apart. Levulan topically is activated with an appropriate light source. The acne benefit can persist for more than two years.

The newest thing in hair loss is an oral agent called Viviscal. This contains deep-sea marine proteins, among other things. Thus far four independent studies have shown double the amount of hair after taking one capsule twice a day for three months. This can be purchased over the counter at pharmacies.

As for U.S. use of the botulinum toxin-A (BTA) products, Botox now has 74% market share, Dysport 24%, and the newest addition, Xeomin has 2%. They all are composed of the structurally identical 150 kilo Dalton active botulinum toxin-A polypeptide molecule. Interestingly, there is now good experimental evidence to show that more people may be able to be treated with a vial of Dysport than with either of the other two. Also, of the three,

Xeomin is technically the most sophisticated since it is the only one to be extracted from the bacterium without any of the inert surrounding aggregating proteins.

These products are now being used off label for such creative uses as treating TMJ disorders, the "gummy smile," and treating the sometimes-encountered "sad mouth" downward appearance of the corners of the mouth. We have been using all of these for migraine control, and localized area excessive sweating for many years. Of course, the use of BTA for wrinkle prevention and treatment is the mainstay utility of these agents. I can't explain why, but in the past four months in Lancaster and surrounding counties, I have seen more new client/patients for Botox/Dysport/Xeomin treatments than in any 12-month stretch any time over the past 14 years. It is as if "Botox" finally found Central Pennsylvania! My wife thinks that Botox has now become the cosmetic equivalent of hair coloring! It's hard to say about that, but it certainly has dramatically increased in popularity and widespread use.

I thought that it would be possible to discuss all topics covered at the conference in one article. It is not. Next time I will talk about what's new in fillers and aesthetic equipment. Very exciting! Thanks for reading. 🌸

- W.A. Carter, M.D.



Wm. A. Carter, M.D.
Medical Cosmetics
(717) 735-3900
www.medcoslanc.com



Since 1999 Dr. Carter has been extensively involved in all office-based things having to do with appearance optimization. He has performed over 35,000 Botox treatments and thousands of laser and filler procedures. He maintains active practices in Lancaster, Dauphin, and York counties.



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