

Refresh or Enhance Your Natural Beauty

Cosmetic Surgery Update. LASERDERM Spring 2002

"A cosmetic procedure should ultimately make you feel and look better. However, glib promises, inflated claims, and guarantees should be viewed with skepticism," says Dr. Sharyn Laughlin, Medical Director of Laserderm.

With the cosmetic surgery explosion, medical procedures developed by physicians have moved "from the fluorescent lights of doctors' offices to candlelit eucalyptus-scented skin care salons and wellness centers."

This quotation is taken from a recent article in the New York Times warning that there has been an alarming increase in complications associated with cosmetic procedures performed by *non-physicians*.

This does not mean that it should be assumed that every physician doing cosmetic surgery has the appropriate training and expertise. In Ontario, there are no regulations governing cosmetic surgery and many physicians step outside their field of formal training to dabble in cosmetic surgery. "Selecting the person who does your cosmetic procedure requires careful consideration."

Dr. Laughlin offers advice on how you can avoid some of the pitfalls:

- Set realistic expectations for yourself from the outset. An experienced specialist will give you a balanced perspective-attainable benefits tempered by difficulties (if any) along the way and minor or major risks that could occur. You should also receive information comparing the procedure being contemplated to all other alternatives, including any that your doctor may not perform.
- Establish your comfort level with the credentials of your physician, including formal specialty training and experience. Many physicians performing cosmetic skin surgery have no proper training in either surgery or dermatology. Ask the physician directly whether he/she has Royal College certification and in what field.

"At Laserderm we don't subscribe to physicians 'crossing over' and practicing outside their area of expertise," says Dr. Laughlin who adheres to this principle strictly. She limits her activity to laser and non-invasive skin surgery. If you need a facelift, tummy tuck, breast surgery, or liposuction - she will refer you to a plastic surgeon.

- Be sure you are having the right procedure. "A good part of my day is spent advising patients against having a procedure they came to see me for, either because they don't need it or there is a better alternative, which requires referral to a colleague in another field," muses Dr. Laughlin. "It may not be what the patient wanted to hear, but not everyone is a candidate for cosmetic surgery or would obtain a worthwhile benefit from a given procedure."

For 15 years Laserderm has provided unique expertise in laser skin surgery to over 60,000 patients from across Canada, the United States, and as far away as Greece, Malaysia and Brazil.

Expertise comes best from formal specialty training and long experience. Laserderm medical director Sharyn Laughlin has been a board-certified dermatologist (Canada, U.S.A.) for 21 years. A Canadian pioneer in laser surgery (1983), Dr. Laughlin has been immersed in every aspect of laser medicine for 19 years - research, teaching, and patient care.

Laserderm (established in 1987) is a leading research and teaching centre for the development of new technology. Over 600 physicians worldwide have received training in various types of laser surgery from Dr. Laughlin.

For the patient with wrinkles, sun damage, birthmarks, scars, stretch-marks, unwanted hair, tattoos, spider veins and aging skin, Laserderm provides every aspect of care-including the ability to diagnose and manage related or unrelated dermatologic problems. Their success in providing complete care is largely due to the local dermatologists who refer patients for laser surgery, and assist with important screening and follow-up.



Dr. Sharyn Laughlin
Specialist in laser medicine since 1983 with the Nd:Yag laser used for leg veins, hair removal and photorejuvenation.

Other centres find it difficult to match Laserderm's array of proven and innovative technology: 12 systems - 10 lasers, one microdermabrasion unit, and the new radio frequency (RF) device. This affords them the unique ability to tailor a distinctive program to meet the special needs of each patient requiring skin rejuvenation or the removal of spider veins and age spots, using all the new procedures designed to make you look your best. Dr. Laughlin offers some helpful guidelines:

- For any patient, but particularly someone with young skin and few wrinkles or blemishes, prevention is the answer - sun protection, lifestyle measures and nutrition. Nourish and protect

your skin, don't simply 'treat' it. Healthy skin usually looks good. Rubbing on a lot of skin care products is not necessary and may be counter productive as the skin's repair and immune system can be overwhelmed by too many chemicals over time.

- Avoid 'product hypnosis' with skin care products with unproven claims (the vast majority) and too many chemicals. Most products share 90% of the same ingredients and differ little except for the fancy packaging. Keep it simple. Use as few products as possible with the lowest number of ingredients.

You are often better off ingesting some micronutrients than rubbing them on. "In the search for healthy and beautiful skin, less is often more," says Dr. Laughlin. "We will help you find the balance you need based on science and the art of the possible, not hope in a bottle."

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- Good skin needs prevention and nutrition. Sometimes a chemical peel or microdermabrasion could be helpful to improve texture and restore luster. There are too many young looking patients having photorejuvenation, laser, and 'lift' procedures. "It's like the ads for products and cosmetic surgery. They show a beautiful person with flawless skin who clearly does not need therapy."
- For aging or damaged skin and associated problems there are specific procedures proven to offer a benefit. However, each patient should assess their comfort level with the common situation where laser surgery is performed in a vacuum by physicians and non-physicians without specialty training in cutaneous medicine. "The procedure is only one part of the expertise required to take you through your cosmetic treatment safely."
- Photofacials or lunchtime peels are now in great demand because there is no apparent injury to the skin and no down time. However, they provide less rejuvenation than laser resurfacing, and are better suited to young patients with minimal damage.

With her experience and array of technology, Dr. Laughlin is able to mix and match or "layer" procedures for each patient's special needs:

- > Chemical peels - for acne and pigmentation problems.
- > Microdermabrasion - for acne scarring and fine wrinkles.
- > The RF system - for sun damage with brown spots, fine spider veins and wrinkles.
- > The Nd:Yag laser - when collagen tightening is needed.
- > Injections of fillers or Botox to remove localized lines.
- > Skin care programs to nourish and maintain healthy skin.

Laser treatment is very safe with the right laser in expert hands. There is an obvious benefit to the patient in their laser therapist being a dermatologist. Laserderm believes there is a natural fusion between laser skin surgery and dermatology. A recent study in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that for any type of surgery, the experience of the surgeon determines if you get the best results with the lowest rate of complications. Laserderm provides patients with the blended experience of 21 years in dermatology and 19 years in laser skin surgery.

Selecting the person who does your cosmetic procedure requires careful consideration

The Laserderm Rejuvenation Program

- Laser resurfacing
- Microdermabrasion
- Chemical peels
- Fillers: Artecoll
Restylane
- Skin care programs
- Botox injections
- Photofacials
- Renews facial skin, repairs collagen and sun damage
- Removes wrinkles, spider veins, brown marks and birthmarks
- Skin care therapy to maintain healthy skin

"Where would you rather have rejuvenation?"

LASERDERM . . .

trusted for 15 years by over 60,000 patients

Medical Director : Sharyn Laughlin FRCP(C)

- Board Certified Dermatologist (Canada & USA)
- Canadian Pioneer in laser skin surgery (1983)

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