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Mechanical or chemical resurfacing? Combine for optimal transformation

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Mechanical resurfacing and chemical resurfacing techniques have been around for thousands of years. Both methods of skin resurfacing can produce results for patients with pigmentarydisorders, fine rhytides, acne scarring, oily/sebaceous skin and overall tone and texture. Both methods have evolved into popular non-invasive cosmetic procedures for photo-aging and other common cosmetic concerns. Which method of resurfacing is better, mechanical or chemical? The objective is to show that optimal results are obtained when the two procedures are combined during a single treatment. Mechanical resurfacing (aka microdermabrasion, mechanical exfoliation or micro-resurfacing) employs the use of a medium, such as crystals, a diamond tip or a bristle tip. The medium is combined with vacuum for exfoliation of the stratum corneum as well as circulation, which supports the inflammatory response in the dermis. An increase in collagen remodeling is shown as well as the stratum corneum normalizing and achieving a healthy "basket weave" appearance, according to studies in the Journal for dermatology surgery. Also increases hydration by improving the barrier function of the skin.

Chemical resurfacing (aka chemical peels or chemical exfoliation) uses a chemical, such as glycolic, salicylic or trichloracetic acid (TCA), to exfoliate the stratum corneum. There are different levels of chemical resurfacing, from superficial to deep peels. The stronger the peel, the better the results but along with deeper peels come risks and complications. Some of the most popular agents used for chemical resurfacing are glycolic, lactic, salicylic and TCA. When the stratum corneum is removed from the mechanical resurfacing im mediately prior to chemical resurfacing, the peeling agent will have increased penetration into the skin. This will also decrease downtime since peeling agents usually go after the keratin. Both methods show an improvement in the skin, but the combination of mechanical resurfacing and chemical resurfacing delivers a synergistic result. Not only are results vastlyimproved but downtime is also decreased. Today, patients want results with little to no downtime, and the combination of mechanical with chemical resurfacing during a single treatment capitalizes on these demands

Biography

Laura L McDermott has been in the aesthetics industry for over ten years, helping people look and feel better. She has practiced as an esthetician, medical assistant and laser technician in Arizona. In 2005, she received her Bachelor's Degree in Communication/Mass Communication at Arizona State University. Combining her hands-on experience as a skin care professional and her passion for skin, she then began working as an educator and a trainer. Over the last five years, she has taught at the Skin & Makeup Institute, Clearskin Laser Centre and various CME workshops, which include lecturing at SDSS and ASLMS. She has also created and recorded online educational webinars for Universal Companies. Currently, she is working with DermaSweep as the VP of Training & Development, where she works closely with UCI Dermatology, UCSF Dermatology and Scripps Dermatology on resurfacing protocols.

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