

Now is the Time to Get Ready for Summer!

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Believe it or not, although fall is here and winter is peeking around the corner, you should start planning to get your skin in shape for next summer now and not next summer. All too often people realize they have unsightly varicose veins, **spider veins**, an excess of unwanted hair, and an accumulation of brown or 'sun spots' when the weather turns warm and they want to wear shorts, tank tops and swim suits. These problems can be corrected but typically require several treatments and for the best results, your skin should not be exposed to the sun while you are having the treatments. In addition, fall and winter months are the perfect time to take inventory of the changes in your skin that have occurred from enjoying our beautiful spring and summer days and get them treated.

A couple of things you should know: those little brown spots that develop on your face, chest, tops of your hands and your forearms are not "old age spots" nor do they have anything to do with your liver. I have had a number of patients refer to them as "liver spots". This is incorrect. These brown spots are the direct result of cumulative sun damage. If you had microscopic vision you would see an abnormal proliferation of pigment cells and elongation of epidermal cells forming club-shaped extensions. Having these "**sun spots**" **increases one's risk for melanoma, basal cell cancer and squamous cell cancer**. These brown spots are known as solar lentigines and can be removed effectively with laser and also intense pulsed light for those individuals with thousands of lentigines. Multiple treatments are needed to achieve satisfactory improvement.

Please go to Dr. Patricia Wong's web site to see results from actual patients who have had the procedure. www.patriciawongmd.com

Attack of the Spiders



Spider veins and small varicose veins are easier to remove when injections to seal the veins are started earlier rather than later. Many times I am told by patients, that they will wait until the veins get bigger since they don't look "that bad right now." This is a mistake. Left on their own, not only will more dilated vessels form but they will merge and network with other little veins forming new blood vessels. Remember: the more vessels you have, the more treatments that will be required to remove them. Larger vessels require more injections to remove and take longer to heal. It is easier and quicker to remove spider veins early. The recovery time is shorter and the number of treatments required for clearing is less. Very large veins may require more invasive procedures to remove such as vein stripping or endovenous radiofrequency ablation for removal.

Winter is a great time to do these treatments because you will be wearing pants or stockings anyway and your legs will be covered while they are healing.

SKIN TIP

Remember to apply sunscreen on the eyebrows; precancerous lesions can develop in these areas too!

Tired of Unwanted Hair?



Laser Hair Removal is a popular effective treatment to reduce the regrowth of unwanted body hair. Generally 5-7 treatments are needed to remove the hair. However, it is imperative the skin be protected from the sun for the duration of the treatments. This means before, during and in between treatments. Getting a tan can cause your skin to become discolored and will interfere with laser treatments. So you can see it is best to do laser hair removal in the fall and winter months, since very few people want to avoid the sun in the summer. Don't wait until summer to discover that you are too hairy to wear that cute swimsuit. A skin tip for the guys: reducing the amount of hair on your back can help improve acne breakouts on your back. It also will eliminate ingrown hairs which can be a problem associated with shaving, especially on the face. This is a very popular procedure for men who have excessive nasal and ear hair.

What's New? Check out the new Products we are now carrying in our office!

Our office is now carrying a **new triple anesthetic cream** that is more effective than the traditional lidocaine creams available in the local pharmacies. It is terrific for numbing the skin prior to laser treatments for hair removal and age spots. It also works wonderfully to relieve itching associated with bug bites and miscellaneous stubborn localized itchy areas on arms, legs, and back. Carry a tube in your travel bag and be ready at all times for the unexpected! Many athletes will not wear sunscreen because it gets into their eyes and stings. I have experienced this myself and can understand why this would be a deterrent. I have now found a solution to this problem after personally testing hundreds of sunscreens.

I am now carrying a full UVA-UVB protection spectrum face stick in my office.

It will not migrate into your eyes and applies easily to the skin and is virtually invisible. It is

exclusively available to my patients. As the weather cools, the drop in atmospheric humidity and the increase use of heat in our homes and offices contribute to epidermal cell dehydration; causing skin cells to separate and lose moisture. This shows up in the skin as red itchy scaly rashes. If the condition is severe enough you will see "cracks" appearing on the surface of your skin. Prevent this from happening by applying **Triple Therapeutix Body Lipid Lotion** twice a day. Body Lipid contains the natural ceramides and phospholipids that your skin needs to stay hydrated and healthy. Regular over the counter lotions do not contain these ingredients. Simply occluding the top of the skin with a greasy cream will not repair the structural damage from dehydration. Body Lipid Lotion is available exclusively in our office. Don't let the winter weather beat up your skin. Now is the time to start weather proofing treatments to keep your skin healthy and smooth. People with **atopic dermatitis, eczema, and psoriasis** will also benefit from Body Lipid Lotion.

Remember to Get Checked



It's a good idea to have a complete skin exam after the summer especially if you haven't had one in at least a year to find out what condition your skin is in and to be checked for skin cancer. Any mole that is new, or has been changing in size, color, shape, itching, or bleeding should be evaluated. Skin cancers can be subtle. It may be mistaken for a pimple that won't heal, or a dry rough spot of skin that you keep picking off with your fingernails and it continues to recur. Skin cancer usually does not hurt or cause any discomfort. Waiting for pain and /or bleeding to develop is not advisable as this allows a skin cancer to become more advanced. This can result in more complex surgeries to have the cancer removed or in the case of an advanced **melanoma**; a cure may not be possible, depending on the extent of the tumor at the time of diagnosis.

Protect Your Skin All Year: Tanning Is Harmful To Your Skin



A final thought: Many people have the misconception that it is not necessary to wear any sunscreen because it is winter. We all have chosen to live in this area because of our fantastic weather. It is sunny here virtually every day except a few weeks out of the entire year! This includes winter. Ultraviolet A and B rays penetrate your skin every day and UVA is present every day even when it is cloudy or cool. UVA radiation penetrates car windows, so sunscreen need to be worn even in the car. This means you will continue to have cumulative sun damage if you do not wear sunscreen on a daily basis on all sun exposed skin. Dr. Wong has carefully chosen sunscreens to match different skin types. Our office carries sunscreen for children, people with sensitive skin, people with hairy arms and legs, people who have had skin cancer and need high protection from UVB and UVA, and sunscreen that will not burn your eyes. Stop by and see what is available. Let us help you find a sunscreen to suit your needs.