

Dr. Patricia Wong's Summer Newsletter 2009

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PREDICTING THE FUTURE

Have you ever wondered what you will look like 20 years from now? Do this revealing test in the privacy of your home. Place a small mirror between your legs with your feet hip distance apart. Now bend over with your palms in front of your feet and place your head between your legs and look into the mirror. Notice the increase in deep lines in your face and wrinkles that appear under the eyes and on the cheeks. As we age, the collagen and elastic fibers that provide tissue support become fragmented and disappear. This causes a decrease in skin elasticity and fullness; your face begins to sag and sink into itself and this causes increased lines on the lower face as gravity pulls facial tissue south. Osteoporosis of the facial bones also occurs. You should be consuming 1000mg to 1500mg of calcium a day in your diet to help minimize these changes. If your vitamin D level is low, take a supplement 800 IU a day. Your vitamin D level can be checked by a blood test. Thinning of facial bones causes the bones to become smaller and the skin drapes over the

smaller bones rather than in a smooth taut manner.

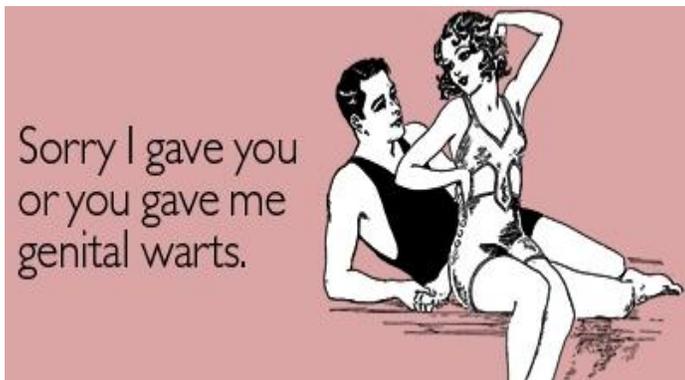
Antioxidants can help combat oxidation of collagen and elastin fibers but it is equally important to be on an effective skin care regimen that stimulates and increases collagen production. The most effective treatments are prescription strength creams. Laser facials can stimulate fibroblasts (collagen producing cells in dermis of the skin) to make collagen. Typically 6 treatments are recommended to see results. Laser facials are painless and there is no down time. This treatment is best used as a preventative measure and will not reverse deep lines and wrinkles. The latter require more intensive treatments for improvement. Volume loss is best corrected with dermal filler injections. This may require 4-6 syringes of filler depending on how much volume needs to be replaced. Sunken cheeks will sag onto the mouth and cause deepening of the so-called smile lines.

The Food and Drug Administration has tightened restrictions on permanent dermal fillers because of complications that can occur 1-6 years after injection. The most recent filler to be discontinued is ARTEFILL. The company has declared bankruptcy. Patients were developing purple red hard bumps underneath the skin on their face. These nodules may not go away with treatment and may require surgical removal. Currently, the best options are hyaluronic fillers such as Juvederm, Perlane, and Restylane. Hyaluronic acid is a normal substance present in the dermal layers of the skin. Hyaluronic acid composes the dermal matrix to which collagen fibers attach, giving your skin structure and volume. Although these are temporary fillers, the results can last up to 12 to 18 months. Also, if you are not satisfied with the correction it can be reversed with an enzyme injection that will dissolve the filler. Current studies demonstrate that these hyaluronic fillers can stimulate your own cells to produce collagen. This is an added benefit.

MAKE LOVE.....NOT WARTS!

Certainly there is nothing wrong with a little romance but are you certain you or your new crush aren't infected with human papilloma virus, pox virus or herpes virus? Before things heat up any further, read on before you decide to slip into those silk leopard pajamas.

There are several misperceptions that people have that I would like to correct.



1."My last genital herpes outbreak was 10 years ago. I haven't had any problems since, so that means I am no longer infectious and I do not have herpes anymore."

Answer: Wrong. Herpes simplex virus (HSV-2) resides in the body permanently. The reason you are not having symptoms such as painful blisters, is because your immune system has produced antibodies against the virus to keep it under control. Most people infected with HSV-2 ARE ASYMPTOMATIC and can transmit the virus. 70 % of HSV-2 is transmitted by SHEDDING IN ASYMPTOMATIC persons. Many of these people will not have recognized that they have had herpes. If one partner has genital herpes and the other does not, the risk of transmission is approximately 5-10% per year. Asymptomatic HSV-2 infection is more common in men and in people who also have HSV-1, which causes cold sores on the lips and around the mouth. The risk of a susceptible female for contracting genital HSV from an infected male is 80% after 1 sexual contact. Genital HSV infections increase the risk for acquiring human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

2."Since I'm a guy, I have nothing to worry about. Human papilloma virus (HPV) infection is only a problem for women. If I infect my girlfriend she may get cervical cancer if it is only HPV 16 or 18."

Answer: There are more than 120 types of human papilloma virus to date. High risk HPV types are 16, 18, 31, 33, 35, 45, 58, 5, and 8. High risk HPV has been associated with tumors of the penis, anus, oral mucosa, throat, and vulva. HPV DNA has been detected in up to 30% of nonmelanoma skin cancers. The carcinogenic potential of these viruses extends beyond the genitals. HPV can infect the conjunctival lining of the eyes, 50% of anal cancers are associated with HPV. HPV has been isolated in squamous cell carcinoma in situ of the penis and vulva. Even low risk HPV such as HPV 6 has been occasionally found in penile cancers. HPV can develop in the mouth, on the lips and in the larynx. Placing fingers in body orifices that are infected with HPV can also spread infection to the finger.

Europe, Australia, and New Zealand are administering the HPV vaccine to males and females to prevent infection and spread of HPV. I suspect in several years that will be the standard of care in the United States as well.

3."Now that I have been treated and the warts are gone, I don't need to worry about catching anything again because I am immune."

Answer: Although you can clear an HPV infection you can always get infected again. Also given the number of HPV types, you can also expose yourself to a different HPV virus. However, there is no evidence suggesting you are permanently infected. HPV can be cleared with treatment.

4. Any condom will do

Answer: No. Condoms made from sheep intestine provide no protection against sexually transmitted diseases.

Condoms seem to reduce the transmission of HSV-2 for women but less so for men.

Advising long term monogamous couples to use condoms when one partner develops warts seems unwarranted because viral transmission has most likely already occurred.

5."If I don't have sex (as in sexual intercourse) I'm safe."

Answer: You are not paying attention! Reread answer to question 2.

6. "HSV-1 is only in the mouth and HSV-2 is only in the genital region."

Answer: You can acquire an infection with both viruses in both locations. There is no viral law that limits the virus to only one body area. It is more common to have HSV-1 around the mouth and lips and HSV-2 in the genital area but you can get HSV-1 in the genital area and HSV-2 in your mouth. Oral sex can spread these viruses. One consolation is HSV-1 infection in the genital area tends to be less severe than HSV-2.

If you notice a "new mole" or pimples appearing in the genital or pubic area you should make an appointment to be examined by Dr. Wong. Chances are you may have a viral infection such as HPV or molluscum contagiosum. These lesions are contagious and can spread rapidly. It is easier to obtain control and clearance if you are seen earlier. Do not wait to see what will happen or how big the lesions will get. This may result in the treatment being more uncomfortable as well as requiring multiple treatments and visits before the infection is resolved. Waxing, scratching, and shaving over such lesions can spread the infection.

SPOTS ONLY LOOK GOOD ON A LEOPARD!



When is a freckle not a freckle? When it does not go away!

Freckles are temporary brown flat spots that completely disappear when you are no longer in the sun. Persistent brown spots are called solar lentigos and are a sign of sun damage not cuteness. A recent study has shown that solar lentigos are due to a specific mutation within the skin cell due to cumulative ultraviolet radiation damage. Although the mutation does not appear to be linked with cancer, it is a sign of sun damage. Individuals with many solar lentigos are at increased risk for skin cancer because it is a sign that there is probably other subclinical cellular damage within the skin that just hasn't yet become clinically obvious. These flat brown spots over time will become raised bumps and often can be warty in appearance. Besides being unattractive, they can itch or become tender when rubbing on clothing. Scratching can lead to the lesions becoming infected and possibly scarring.

Intense pulsed light (IPL) is an excellent treatment for removing solar lentigos before they

become raised and also to improve the health of the sun damaged skin. The treatment involves shining special wavelengths of light that are chosen to be absorbed by the pigment in these spots. The heat from the light causes the pigment to crust. In 10-14 days, the spots will flake off. Generally, 4-7 photorejuvenation treatments are needed for improvement and are performed about every 3-4 weeks. There is an added bonus of collagen tightening that also occurs with IPL. If you decide to seek treatment when the spots become raised, IPL is not effective at this stage and each individual lesion will require freezing in order to be removed.

Actual patients treated by Dr. Wong, with Intense Pulse Light



Arm before



Arm after 4 treatments



Forearm before



Forearm after 4 treatments



Hand before



Hand after 4 treatments



Leg before



Leg after 4 treatments

GOOD NEWS FOR ACNE SUFFERERS

Acne is a disease of the pilosebaceous unit. Forty per cent of adolescents will develop physiologic acne. Pimples are often an early sign of puberty. In girls, acne may precede the onset of the period by more than 1 year. The onset of acne varies. It may start as early as 6 or 8 years of age or it may not appear until age 20 or later. Acne usually resolves in the early twenties. However, particularly in women, acne may persist into the thirties and forties.

Although it seems that there are many different acne medications available at the drugstore, the reality is it makes very little sense to try more than 2 different products. All products contain the same active ingredients: glycolic acid, salicylic acid or benzoyl peroxide. If any combination of these products is ineffective, you should see Dr. Wong for prescription medications, medical grade acne peels, advanced medical microdermabrasion, and/or laser. Medical strength treatments are more effective than spa or esthetician treatments.

Laser acne facials can be an effective adjunct to the acne treatment program. Laser energy is delivered to pimples, killing bacteria and shrinking up overactive oil glands. Laser acne facials have no down time. You can resume your normal activities immediately. Typically, the treatments are painless; some patients report feeling a mild warmth or tingling sensation during the treatments. Anywhere from 6-8 treatments may be needed to see improvement in the acne. Laser acne facials can be an option for patients who do not wish to take oral antibiotics.

A common misconception is that acne is caused by having a dirty face. Cleansing more than 2 times a day is unnecessary and will result in drying the skin out. This will cause your face to become flaky, red, and irritated as well as still having the pimples. Overwashing or using harsh soaps will injure the skin's natural lipid barrier. You should always wash your hands before touching your face or before applying any topical agent to your face.

The earliest stage of acne is whiteheads. These appear as little skin colored bumps underneath the skin. They are most easily seen by stretching the skin. This lesion is the precursor to the big, red, juicy pimples. It is important to treat acne as early as possible to avoid progressing to this stage. The deeper larger pimples can result in permanent scarring and are disfiguring and painful. Do not squeeze these. You will increase your chances of scarring and infection by doing so. Make an appointment to have this type of severe acne treated. Performing home fingernail surgery will not be successful.

ONE OF DR. WONG'S FAVORITE THINGS TO DO IS TO HELP ADOLESCENTS WITH ACNE!

So, don't struggle alone with trying to clear your acne. Call our office now and start clearing up your acne with a medical strength skin care program specifically designed for your skin type. Acne surgery can be performed to clear up pimples more quickly. Stubborn, large, painful pimples can be injected with medication to clear them up in a few days.
