

BEAUTY BUZZ with DR. PAUL JARROD FRANK



Autumn is now in full swing with social events, holiday planning, work and end of the year plans on everyone's to do lists. Despite our busy calendars, we all still want to look and feel our best in between the hustle and bustle that makes urban life so great. *Gotham Magazine* checks back in with our beauty expert, Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank in part two of our rejuvenation series. As the director of one of New York's premiere cosmetic dermatology practices, Dr. Frank's aesthetic is known in circles that seek out subtlety, comfort, and a natural look. A Board Certified Dermatologist and Dermatologic Surgeon, Dr. Frank specializes in minimally invasive cosmetic rejuvenation in his accredited facility on the Upper East Side's Fifth Avenue. As the Director of the 5th Avenue Dermatology Surgery & Laser Center, Dr. Frank remains on the cutting edge of the rapidly advancing pace of beauty's technologies. In our ongoing Q & A, Dr. Frank gives the inside scoop on his secret weapons.

Q: What are the most common skin complaints at the end of the summer?

Although there are certainly age-specific concerns regarding sun-damage, the most common complaints relate to the pigment and textural changes that the sun causes over time. Brown spots, widened pores, and the loss of vibrancy to one's skin certainly are common themes come September. Despite the admitted diligence of using sunscreen, many patients complain of progressive ageing each year, not realizing that much of the cosmetic sequelae they are experiencing now come from sun exposure decades ago. Like many carcinogens, sun damage takes years to develop. The results of sunburns today won't be seen for years to come.

Q: What are the most recent and newest tricks in your field?

Many of the newest advancements, particularly in laser surgery aren't necessarily new procedures, but rather improvements of older ones.

As of recent, there have been major improvements in the area of laser hair removal. The major limits since its inception, in the mid nineties, have always been discomfort, prolonged treatment times, and the need for innumerable treatments to acquire permanence. This was often a turn off for many despite the enormous demand in the laser hair removal market. In addition, many different lasers were needed to accommodate the various skin and hair colors that were being treated.

Recently, one of the leaders in the laser hair removal market, **Lumenis**®, has filled the holes in this niche to make laser hair removal more accessible and easier for the general public.

First, the newer device, **The Light Sheer® Duet™**, has a much larger spot size allowing for removal speeds at 5-10 times its original pace. Amazingly, it allows a laser surgeon to treat an entire leg or back in 15 minutes, as opposed to over an hour. Second, utilizing a treatment head that gently draws the skin into the device prior to laser pulsing not only dramatically reduces pain to a bare minimum but also increases laser penetration and subsequently efficacy, requiring significantly fewer treatments than were required in the past. We can pretty much achieve 90% hair reduction in 5 treatments on the average patient.

Q: Can the laser treat all skin and hair types?

Traditionally, the **Light Sheer®** technology has always been the most versatile and powerful hair removal system. Generally it is most commonly found in a physician's office rather than a hair removal spa because of its power. In general, laser hair removal spas will require many more treatments because of the technologies being used and the lack of medical training in the technicians performing the procedures. What is unique to the **Light Sheer® Duet™** is its ability to treat all skin types from very fair individuals to very dark skinned types. Ideally laser hair removal treats darker hair on lighter skin best. Often variables such as lighter hair or darker skin will add treatment sessions. What we have found with the **Light Sheer® Duet™** is that lighter hair such as red hair is being treated more effectively.

Q: Have the latest improvements affected the type of patients coming in for treatment?

Absolutely, we are certainly seeing many more men. Now that backs and shoulders can be done painlessly in 15-20 minutes they are certainly lining up for the procedure; or at least their wives and girlfriends are bringing them in. We are

also seeing women do more extended areas that time, money or discomfort limited them in the past. Legs and arms are becoming much more the norm rather than the exception.

Q: Is Laser Hair Removal safe?

In theory, it is extremely safe. The wavelength of light is not carcinogenic and the manner in which the hair follicle is damaged is far more specific than hair removal treatments in the past such as electrolysis. Once the hair is removed, the need for the chronic trauma of waxing and chemical depilatories is totally alleviated. In fact, laser hair removal is an excellent treatment for ingrown hairs anywhere on the body. The main safety issue with this technology, as with any laser treatment, is in the hands of the operator. As common as laser hair removal has become it is still laser surgery; a laser is just a fancy knife. There are several variabilities in how a laser is used depending on each patient, their hair and skin color; therefore if it is used inappropriately, the laser can cause significant damage. Unfortunately, about 10% of my laser practice is dealing with complications from several types of laser technology. Usually, the problems arise from improper treatment or improper management of the complications often seen in medi-spas. In most states, such as New Jersey, laser hair removal can only be performed by a physician. Here in New York it is commonly performed by aestheticians and technicians without formal medical training. Here is where the problem lies. Hopefully, with the speed and cost effectiveness of the newer technology we will see this procedure being brought back to the doctors office so that safety can be maximized.

Q: Does the newer technology make it more affordable?

In many ways it does. Although the new technology itself is very expensive, it does allow for very rapid treatment times without the need for expensive topical anesthetics and messy gels. In addition, although each individual treatment may be a bit more expensive than what one acquires in a medi-spa, overall cost is reduced because only 4-5 monthly treatment sessions are necessary as opposed to 6-10 with other technologies. Obviously, larger areas such as legs that are popular with the **Light Sheer® Duet™** are going to be more costly than smaller areas. Ultimately, you do get what you pay for with laser surgery. Faster treatment times, less discomfort, and an excellent efficacy and safety profile are the advantages of this device. The top priority in my office is that patients receive treatments which are catered to their specific needs, are given appropriate expectations, and are provided with a safe and comfortable experience. ●

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