

A treatment room at PFrankMD Skin Salon.



BEAUTY

N.Y. Dermatologist to Launch Chain of Medical Spas

● PFrankMD Skin Salon will accommodate the growing number of noninvasive cosmetic procedures available on the market.

BY ELLEN THOMAS

New York-based cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank is broadening the reach of his Upper East Side practice.

Sparked by the rapidly growing influx of non-invasive cosmetic procedures entering the market, in tandem with the increasing

popularity of injectables – particularly with Millennial patients – Frank is set to launch his own chain of medical spas.

The first PFrankMD Skin Salon opened this month in an annex across the hall from Frank's practice on Fifth Avenue, and a downtown location is set to open in 2018. Plans are also in the works for Skin Salon outposts in Connecticut, Long Island and Miami.

"In all honesty, the largest growth in beauty isn't makeup or skin care or hair care – it's cosmetic rejuvenation," Frank said. "There's a multibillion dollar industry going on, and every new technology coming out is less invasive and has less

downtime, and is targeted toward younger and younger audiences."

Each Skin Salon will be overseen by a board-certified doctor and staffed with registered nurses and aestheticians. The menu was designed to reflect the burgeoning number of choices in noninvasive procedures and treatments on the market today. It runs the gamut from injectables to noninvasive antiaging treatments such as lasers, microneedling, chemical peels, the body treatment SculpSure, skin-tightening ultrasound and radio frequency to facials involving LED light therapy, oxygen, microdermabrasion and products from Madonna's MDNA line. (Frank, Madonna's own dermatologist, is set to be the sole spa service provider for the line in the U.S.)

"Let's face it – people don't want their grandmother's facial anymore," Frank said.

The difference between Frank's dermatology practice and the PFrankMD Skin Salon is that treatments and procedures in the medical spa don't require the specific skill set of Frank himself – thus allowing him to offer lower price points and garner a younger clientele who have been accustomed to purchasing treatments and procedures on Groupon and Gilt City.

"I have a lot of people who call up and can't afford to see me, or don't want to pay the consultation fees," Frank said. "With my name recognition and the physicians and nurses I train [to staff the Skin Salons], we can set up a standard of care that is reproducible."

Frank noted that safety is another issue he has seen arise with the influx of new procedures and medical spas opening to fulfill consumer demand for them – in his own practice, he has seen new patients coming to him to fix faulty fillers, allergic

reactions and laser burns becoming more common in recent years.

Frank's Skin Salons are part of a larger trend of dermatologists expanding their practices to accommodate the growing number of cosmetic treatments and procedures on the market. Last year, New York-based Dr. Ellen Marmur opened a second location of her dermatology practice – called MM2 and targeted at younger patients – and earlier this summer another Upper East Side dermatologist Dr. Amy Wechsler had to move her office to a larger space on East 85th Street to accommodate more CoolSculpting machines – she has four, the most in the city – which is a rapidly growing area of her practice.

"This is a trend – dermatology is on fire in the U.S. market," said Wendy Lewis, president of Wendy Lewis & Co., an aesthetics consultancy firm. She ticked off other dermatologist-backed medical spas, such as Dr. Ava Shamban's Skin x Five medical spa on the West Coast, which offers facials, injectables and CoolSculpting in two locations.

Lewis also sees the trend extending to venture capital and private equity – for instance, L Catterton's 2015 investment in Ideal Image, a laser center with more than 100 locations across the country and is set to unveil a rebrand this fall.

But it all circles back to the Millennials, Frank said. "You're seeing improvements in technology, a wider social acceptance of [cosmetic procedures], a photography-based Millennial generation that is obsessed with FaceTuning [an app for editing selfies] and Instagramming and immediate satisfaction. People are now accepting of the things we do in my office and in a medical spa as forms of grooming – it's almost fallen into the category of wellness."