

# Right dermatologist crucial for skin

■ **Doctor's advice:** Says many are taking risks by going to untrained people

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The skin is the largest organ of the body, yet it is often treated casually, by both patients and physicians who are not specially trained in its care.

Choosing the right dermatologist for skin care is one of the most important decisions you'll ever make.

"You'd never have a pediatrician do surgery on your eyes, or have heart bypass surgery done by an allergist, so why would you choose anyone other than a physician who has been specially trained in care of the skin — a dermatologist — when you need care of your skin?" asks Dr. Matthew Kelleher, director of the Advanced Cosmetic Laser and Surgery Center in Joliet, Naperville and Morris. "Dermatologists are uniquely trained to treat diseases and conditions of the skin."

In these days of popular spas and Botox parties, Kelleher says many people are taking risks by using untrained and unqualified people to treat their skin.

"We're seeing a worrisome trend in the use of lasers by unqualified, non-medical individuals, or by doctors who are not specially trained and experts in skin," Kelleher says.

"You want the best trained doctor treating your skin. The most appropriate person to perform laser surgery on the skin is a board-certified dermatologic laser surgeon. Patients should always ask if the physician is board certified in dermatology."

Kelleher notes the Advanced Cosmetic Laser and Surgery Center is one of only a few centers in the country with 12 different lasers, each uniquely able to treat specific conditions.

"What sets us apart from other dermatology centers is the amount of technology we have right here in our offices," Kelleher says. "We are one of the best technologically equipped centers in the country. Having such an unusually vast array of technology not only allows us to achieve superior results, but to do so in fewer, more gentle treatments."

## Laser surgery

Cutaneous laser surgery, called laser therapy, is the use of laser energy to enhance the appearance of the skin by eliminating unwanted lesions such as scars, skin growths, redness, spider veins, discolorations and wrinkles. Lasers can also be used to treat diseases of the skin, including rosacea, acne, psoriasis and skin cancer.

"The trend is to use minimally invasive laser treatments, with minimal discomfort and no down time for the patient," says Kelleher. "This gentle treatment may mean multiple treatment sessions or treatment at regular intervals to maintain the skin, but it results in a more natural outcome. Lasers allow for precise and gentle removal of cosmetically offensive lesions."

Kelleher has found that different lasers affect the same skin



Dr.  
Matthew  
Kelleher

problem in different ways. Furthermore, the use of multiple lasers on any given problem can result in a more successful outcome.

"Being able to use more lasers in each treatment session, we can treat the patient more quickly, with fewer sessions," Kelleher says.

Kelleher says the first step is a thorough evaluation of the skin.

"Patient education is vital," he says. "People generally have no idea of the spectrum of things we can do with modern technology. They just don't have a good sense of what's possible. So we do a lot of education in our practice. We explain what ages skin, what causes skin cancer and what they can do at home. When I talk about anti-aging, I talk about the most simple steps first; then the next

step is minimally invasive laser treatments. The final step might be more invasive therapy. But we like to keep people at the minimally invasive end of the treatment spectrum."

A patient might come into the Advanced Cosmetic Laser and Surgery Center with concerns about looking older and be contemplating a face lift.

"She may not want major surgery," Kelleher says. "But she doesn't like her aging, tired face. Often she doesn't really need a traditional face lift. I explain to her that her facial skin is really a collection of the various manifestations of aging and sun damage. Then we selectively approach each component of the aging face and treat each individually with the correct laser. The reality is most people don't need a face lift. Rather, they are better off using laser surgery to improve the quality of their facial skin."

## Existed for 35 years

Kelleher notes his practice has been in the Joliet area for 35 years.

"It was founded by Dr. Morton Barnett, who was a pillar of dermatology in the community," Kelleher said. "I joined the practice in 1992, and my specialty was dermatologic surgery. I brought the laser expertise to the practice. Laser surgery has always been my passion. Soon after I joined the practice, the Advanced Cosmetic Laser and Surgery Center was founded."

The future looks bright, according to Kelleher.

"Technology continues to advance, allowing us to achieve even better results," he said. "The latest development is a device called Thermacool. As opposed to lasers, which use light energy, Thermacool focuses radio frequency energy into the skin in order to selectively heat and shrink tissue. This allows us to non-surgically tighten facial skin. Its use includes elevating the brows on the forehead, lifting the jowls, tightening the cheeks, and it even can be used on the abdomen, breasts and neck."

The physicians at the Advanced Cosmetic Laser and Surgery Center treat numerous conditions of the skin, including skin cancer, cosmetic skin surgery, liposculpture and spider and varicose veins.