



note from the editor

GUEST EDITOR: DR MAUREEN ALLEM

In South Africa busy aesthetic practices can testify to the fact that uneven skin tone is a major concern for women of all ages and all skin types. A quarter of all consultations include some pigmentation problem ranging from melasma, sun spots to the post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation (PIH) of acne.

Hydroquinone (HQ) combinations, prescribed by doctors, have been the gold standard for treating all kinds of pigmentation, but HQ alone is not the answer and cannot be used for long term maintenance. The 'Lighten Up' article describes new innovations such as pigmentation peptides, as well as traditional skin lighteners and retinoids for managing this challenging problem in the long term. In addition, the formulation of the product is as important in order to ensure delivery of the active ingredient to the basal layer of the epidermis where the melanocytes are situated. The article also discusses how experienced dermatologists approach the problem using in-office solutions such as IPL technologies, Q Switched lasers and layered peels.

The variety of fractional devices available makes it difficult for the cosmetic doctor to choose the correct device for his or her practice. What must be considered when purchasing one of these devices is the demographics of the practice, the cost of consumables such as treatment tips and the downtime that can be expected with each procedure. In the article 'Connecting the Dots', physicians agree on one point. The results from an ablative fractional laser significantly exceed the rejuvenation one can expect to see from a non-ablative fractional device, but the downside remains the downtime and the healing period, which can be anywhere from a few to 10 days, depending on the aggressiveness of the treatment. In most aesthetic practices, only 4 % of the patient base is willing to undergo 10 days of downtime

and this must be kept in mind when deciding on whether to buy an ablative or non-ablative device.

Unfortunately, fractional technology has not yet reached the point where treatments offer dramatic results with no downtime. There is a trade off and one cannot have dramatic results without the downtime associated with it. Most physicians agree that best results are seen when fractional resurfacing is combined with botulinum toxin, dermal fillers and skin tightening devices.

DR MAUREEN ALLEM

MBBCh.BSc Med

WITS University

Dr. Maureen Allem qualified as a Medical Doctor in 1987 when she was already in her thirties and had two children. Following a 10 year career in the conventional medical profession, running a medical ward in a provincial hospital, she moved into the executive health field, doing annual medicals and life style assessments for top executives.

In early 2001 she became increasingly interested in non surgical aesthetics and the use of non invasive treatments to rejuvenate the face and body and since 2001 she has run her own private specialised aesthetic practice.

In mid 2005 she combined the use of injectables with lasers and other cutting edge therapies and established Skin Renewal. She travels the world to stay up to date with the latest non surgical techniques, attending congresses and forums. Her articles have appeared in numerous publications.