

seeing the light

designed for
esthetician use,
new light therapies
offer clients
a bright future

by Kelly Svoboda Cison

are you looking for a cutting-edge tool that will make your treatments even more effective, treat aging and enhance the healing of post-operative skin? A tool that's easy to master and easy to use? If so, it may be time to look toward the light. Previously available only in dermatologist's offices, new systems are letting estheticians harness light technology to boost results—right in the skin care treatment room.

technology, illuminated

Low-level light therapy is known as either LED (Light Emitting Diodes) or IPL (Intense Pulsed Light). Less powerful than lasers, which is another form of light therapy, LEDs are safe for all ages and skin colors and incur virtually no risk of pain or damage in healthy individuals, says **Kathleen Carney**, CEO of **Skin Blends**, who conducts lectures on the benefits of the therapy. Because of their safety and effectiveness, non-laser light treatments are becoming increasingly popular. And while IPL can only be performed in a medical office in some states, Carney says, LED can be administered by estheticians.

The best part about LED? Though it can produce big results over time, the treatments actually use less energy than a 25-watt bulb. "The cool thing about the therapy is that it offers estheticians a non-traumatic, non-invasive, pain-free, skin rejuvenating technique," notes Carney. That's good news for anyone looking to take a giant leap forward in her practice!

While low-level light therapy has long been used in European esthetics practices, here in the U.S. the FDA has



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—Kathleen Carney

only approved a marketing claim for "periorbital wrinkles," explains **Rick Krupnick**, CEO of **Light BioScience**, which manufactures Gentle Waves photo modulation for medical offices. While Krupnick points out that esthetician-operated machines offer lower capacities than physician-operated machines, the benefits can be equivalent for certain procedures, he says, and his company is currently developing a machine that is designed by and for estheticians.

Though the technology is advanced, the actual treatment could not be easier, say experts. To use, the esthetician positions a hand-held device over a client's face, and low level wavelengths are emitted (the exact range depends on the condition being treated.) Cells within the skin absorb the light as energy, and that jump-starts their production of collagen and fibroblasts. The entire process, which needs to be repeated in a series of treatments for optimal results, takes about one-to-twenty minutes with no post-procedure downtime. ►

seeing the light

lighter and brighter

Light therapy has plenty of benefits for clients, the most encompassing being its ability to rev up sluggish skin processes. By prompting cells to work more efficiently, the increased collagen production can give skin a smoother, less wrinkled appearance and may even reduce the appearance of blemishes and scarring. Interestingly enough, say experts, light therapy can also be used to treat sun damage, and to reduce side effects like redness and swelling from procedures like surgery and peels.

But don't throw away your cleansers and moisturizers! Light therapy won't make traditional skin care services obsolete. Explains Carney, "Results are cumulative, and you won't see them right away—it may take 10 to 12 weeks. So always do light therapy in conjunction with something like microdermabrasion, so clients can see progress immediately."

spotlight on quality

With light therapy devices flooding tradeshow floors, selecting the right one requires research. **Mike Pavia** of **Dynatronics** says a good machine depends on its effectiveness. One tip: research a unit's power output (meaning brighter bulbs) and wavelength settings. The key, says Carney, is to find a machine that can deliver in a short period of time at least four joules of light energy into the skin, which is the level documented by NASA scientists as increasing collagen. Ask manufacturers for recommended treatment times, as well as for testimonials about the product. And most importantly, find out what the manufacturer offers in the way of training, warranties and marketing materials.

In the future, you just might see light therapy machines that treat more than just wrinkles...think about stimulating hair growth or treating pain, which has already been approved by the FDA. Says Carney, "We are just on the cusp of this technology, and its potential uses are limitless." ■

light sources

Synergie LT by Dynatronics

This machine builds collagen to reduce fine lines and wrinkles. It can be used after microdermabrasion or a peel to diminish redness. Treatment time is 12-14 minutes. No formal training is needed. \$4,495. 800-874-6251; www.dynatronics.com.



Ellipse by Candela

The Ellipse comfortably and safely covers a full range of the most frequent esthetic requests, including evening out pigmentation, treating diffuse redness and eradicating age spots. Candela delivers on-site clinical in-service training. www.candelalaser.com.

