

it's more effective for face and scalp. We have a lot of balding men," she says, "who need it on their scalp."

Davidson finds the non-invasive procedures are appealing to both patients and doctors. "There's new things coming out all the time," she says. "It's exciting, because it doesn't always have to be surgery."

### Cosmetic dermatology

The trend toward improving one's appearance without any down time has gathered so much steam that Riverchase and other dermatology practices have added medical spa components. SpaBlue, the adjunct to Riverchase, offers a full complement of enhancing treatments, including Thermage, injectable fillers, laser hair removal, facials, chemical peels, and laser treatments for brown spots, vessels, rosacea and redness. Many women stop in for free cosmetic consultations as well.

SpaBlue's newest laser, the Sciton, is an innovative, multi-function laser geared toward bringing back youth. "There are new lasers coming out all the time," says Dr. Davidson, "and this one's fantastic, because it can do anything and everything you want to do, whereas in the past you'd have 5 or 6 different lasers." The Sciton can treat brown spots and broken blood vessels on the face, it can be used for re-surfacing the skin for better texture and skin tone, and it can address sun damage and wrinkles. It can even do hair removal. "A specific wavelength targets each thing. To resurface, the laser is targeting the water in the skin cells. It dissolves the skin cells, and peels away the top layer of skin," she says.

### A real breakthrough

Sciton re-surfacing is mostly done to the face. "But what's great about this laser," says Davidson, "is you can adjust the depth of penetration. So this is one of the only lasers," she says, "where you can do the neck and the chest for women, and hands and arms. But you cannot do it as strongly - as high a wavelength - as you can on the face. Other areas of the body just don't heal as well, for several reasons.

Davidson explains that for years the "gold standard" in lasers was the CO<sub>2</sub>, "but you're healing for weeks, having a lot of down time and bandages on your face," she says. "Also, it cannot be used off the face."

The Sciton, because it imposes less down time, usually requires more than one treatment, but the trade-off is a no-brainer for today's consumers, who don't want to take time off. The Sciton does offer one efficient procedure combination, however. "We can treat the skin's texture and brown spots at the same time," says Davidson. "It's called the South Beach Peel - a micro-laser peel right over the brown spot treatment. We can do those right on top of each other."

Treatment with the Sciton laser costs anywhere from \$1200-\$1700, depending on how many problem areas a person is targeting. With the South Beach peel, "that includes two laser treatments in one," says Davidson, "so just one visit and you're done."

The line between cosmetic surgery and dermatology is blurring, specifically because of the trend towards non-invasive procedures, according to Davidson. "Cosmetic dermatol-

ogy has been around a while," she explains. "The plastic surgeons are actually starting to do more of what we do, because that's what people want: the non-invasive type of things. We're trained on the lasers and injectables. Plastic surgeons have no training in skin care, so they hire aestheticians to do their skin care," she says.

Patients ultimately have to weigh what type of doctor they need. A skin affliction is obviously the domain of a dermatologist. Enhancements may need the critical eye of a cosmetic surgeon who can fully contrast the options for a patient, but may also be best addressed by a cosmetic dermatologist who speaks the language of skin care and repair. One thing is for certain: quick fixes are a way of life for age-conscious baby boomers, and many of them are discovering the abundant choices at medical spas.

### Be safe

Sun protection is key. "I recommend wearing an SPF 30 or higher," says Dr. Kagen. "Wear one that protects against UVA and UVB, because not every sun-block does both. And the ones that do, say it on the bottle." UVA and UVB refer to the wavelength of light: "UVA penetrates deeper, and burns less," he explains. "Either can cause skin cancer."

"And I recommend people reapply it every hour, to hour and a half," warns Kagen. "Not everyone knows to do that. That's important, for it to last all day long." "SPF 15 blocks about 93 percent of the burning rays," says Dr. Harris, "while SPF 30 blocks about 97 percent."

### screening

**>> May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month:** Riverchase Dermatology is offering free skin cancer screening at its Lee County offices.

**>> Tues, May 6, 8:00-11:30 am**  
7331 Gladiolus Drive, Fort Myers  
Call 239-437-8810 for an appointment for your free screening

**>> Wed, May 7, 8:00 am - 11:30 am**  
1425 Viscaya Pkwy Ste 102, Cape Coral  
Call 239-443-1500 for an appointment for your free screening

"Of course, no sunscreen is 100 percent effective," he counsels. "Clothing is first line of defense. There are a lot of sun-protection clothing lines you can find all over now." The tags and labels that denote UPF, or Ultraviolet Protection Factor, can be misleading, however. The clothing itself does not contain any added protection, such as sun-block in the fabric. "All it is," explains Harris, of the rating, "is the weave. The clothing has a weave that determines how good it's going to be at blocking the sun." The thicker the weave - denim, for example - the less sun penetrates the fabric.

Many would argue that UPF labels are a clever marketing ploy that replaces common sense. "These tags pop up, they're really big now," says Harris, of goods labeled UPF 50 and UPF 70, most often found in sporting goods stores and outfitters. "You'll see the shirts now," he says, with a smile. ■

## Protect The Skin You're In

Has your skin suffered damage from the Florida sun? Then you won't want to miss this! Lee Memorial Health System is providing free skin cancer screenings for our community members so your skin stays beautiful.

### free skin cancer screenings

**Wednesday, April 23**

**8 a.m. to noon**

**Lee Center for Rehabilitation and Wellness**

**2070 Carrell Road, Fort Myers**

**Please RSVP by calling 418-2000.**

**LEE MEMORIAL  
HEALTH SYSTEM**

[www.LeeMemorial.org](http://www.LeeMemorial.org)

