

Health Talk Radio Network Interview

Part 4

The following is excerpted from a radio interview done by Dr. David Goldberg on Health Talk Radio Network during the week of 6/25/01.

Mike: Obviously there are people that have chemical peels, and they do things to their skin, and a lot of people overdo it. I guess you could overdo laser surgery as well, couldn't you?

Dr. Goldberg: You can overdo anything. First of all, if you don't need a procedure and you do it, that by definition is overdone. As I mentioned earlier in the talk, there are these more aggressive laser procedures known as carbon dioxide and erbium that we do use for people with deeper wrinkles. They have been and are still used for people with very fine lines or younger people, and that's really overdone. Sometimes they are not required. We don't always need to treat them with such aggressive systems.

Matt: Give us some tips on skin care. Once we have a treatment, how do we make it last?

Dr. Goldberg: The most important thing to do to make it last is to use appropriate sun protection. That means if you're in warm environments where there's a fair amount of sun, sunscreen should be put on that protects you from both ultraviolet B and ultraviolet A exposure. We traditionally have thought of sunscreens in terms of the SPF, sun protection factors, and people talk about sun protection factors of fifteen or higher to protect the skin. The problem with the SPF, the sun protection factor, is it's only a measure of protection against ultraviolet B. In fact, ultraviolet A is the more damaging of the two ultraviolet wavelengths. That is, it penetrates through glass, it penetrates deeper into skin, and if we simply look at ultraviolet B protection, SPF, we're not going to know how much protection we get from ultraviolet A. So when one buys a sunscreen, it should say on the container that the sunscreen protects against both ultraviolet A and ultraviolet B protection.

Mike: So in other words, what you're saying is you want to make sure that you protect the skin when you go into the sun.

Dr. Goldberg: Right, but recognize that when you're driving your car, that means you're not lying in the sun. Ultraviolet A, which penetrates deeper into the skin, passes right through glass. Or if you're walking on the street, the sun's rays bounce right off the pavement back in your face.

Matt: After a person had one of your treatments on there for their skin, if they went and had facials done, would that accelerate the healing and the correction of their wrinkles.

Dr. Goldberg: Facials and these lunchtime laser procedures are very different, and one doesn't exclude the other one, and frankly one does not help the other one. A facial is done to clean out little blackheads, to make the skin look nicer on the outside. We tend to do microderm abrasions microdermabrasions for that as well. But traditionally neither of these procedures they don't do anything for the deeper layers of skin, which is what the laser procedures are for.

Matt: It does actually stimulate new collagen formation, so it is a small injury you're creating, and then the skin has to get in there and straighten it up. Is that what I'm hearing?

Dr. Goldberg: From the laser procedures, that's absolutely correct.

Mike: You know, there are a lot of older women out there - I say women because I know that from the vanity factor a lot of men don't go out and have brown spots taken off their skin or whatever. But a woman that's aging will have brown spots and age spots show up. Is this a procedure that an elderly person can have done on a regular basis to take care of some of those?

Dr. Goldberg: We've done laser procedures on people into their nineties. Chronology these days has nothing to do with biology. There are people who are healthy in their eighties, who want to look good, and they come in for these procedures. The brown spot laser is a different laser. It's, but it's very easy to use because that laser, in contrast to being a series of treatments like the lunchtime laser procedure for the wrinkles, that procedure, people will do it when used is used once, maybe twice, and they the patients get very dramatic results.

Matt: Varicose veins and spider veins that elderly people have also, I know laser surgery is used for that as well, right?

Dr. Goldberg: People think of varicose veins as those big ropy veins on the legs, and lasers traditionally are not used for that. What lasers are used for are the more spider type veins which are bluish or red on the legs, typically; they can also be on the face.

Matt: How about if we think about people with darker skin. There are some real olive complexioned people and even black people. Can they have some of these treatments without having white splotches?

Dr. Goldberg: The most obvious example where that has become an issue has to do with laser hair removal, which we haven't really addressed. Laser hair removal is based on the premise that the pigment in the hair absorbs the light. So traditionally lasers for hair removal have been only used for light-skinned, dark-haired individuals. Over the last year to year-and-a-half we have a whole new generation of lasers that are used in darker skin types, and we use them in African-Americans, Hispanics, and suntanned Caucasians.

Mike: That's a good point. More with Dr. David Goldberg as we talk about lunchtime laser surgery on Health Talk with Mike, Matt, and Shannon.

(To be continued...)