

## Health Talk Radio Network Interview

### Part 1

*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.*

Matt: We're talking with Dr. David Goldberg. He's a dermatologist. He does laser surgery. It sounds kind of scary to me, and of course, he can do treatments that remove hair and tattoos and even rejuvenate your skin. Dr. Goldberg is Director of Laser Research at Mt. Sinai School of Medicine, and of course he's also a researcher and a clinician who practices what he teaches.

Mike: Doctor, welcome to Health Talk. Is that your big play out there, removing tattoos?

**Dr. Goldberg:** Well, you know, that's one of the plays. As you mentioned this field has evolved exponentially in the last decade to the point where we now have lasers for everything from tattoos to brown spots to wrinkles to hair removal, and now as you alluded to, the anti-aging lasers.

Mike: You can get rid of brown spots with lasers?

**Dr. Goldberg:** Very easily.

Matt: So is this, when people talk about having this lunchtime laser surgery process, is it less invasive than what we normally think about as facelifts?

**Dr. Goldberg:** It's very different than a facelift. A facelift, as you mentioned, is a surgical procedure. It's a complex surgical procedure that is done to tighten the skin. Lasers traditionally have been used to improve wrinkles and improve the quality, tone, and texture of the skin. Lasers for wrinkles and anti-aging have been available for almost a decade. The problem with them has been that in order to improve the quality of skin, we had to remove the outer layer of skin, the epidermis. That created what looked like in essence a burn, an oozing, draining burn, that would require people to take a week to ten days off from work and all their social activities to allow that to heal. And then they'd have redness for months afterwards. What has dramatically changed over the last year is that we can now improve the quality, tone, and texture of skin, make skin look healthier, younger, and more youthful without anybody knowing anything is happening.

Matt: Dr. Goldberg, how long have you been doing these lunchtime laser procedures? That's fairly new isn't it?

**Dr. Goldberg:** It is reasonably new. As you mentioned, we are involved in a lot of the research studies for these new lasers, these new cosmetic lasers. The lasers have been on the market for anywhere from six months to 2 years, depending on the brand. We've been involved in researching them for close to three years already.

The first step to take is to see a doctor that obviously has experience doing these procedures. Go in for a consultation. As I mentioned, there are several different modalities that can be used. And what the doctor will then evaluate is the degree of wrinkles, the degree of aging skin and sun damage. And he will discuss with the patient whether, in fact, the older approach would be more appropriate, which it sometimes is for very deep wrinkles, or whether one of these new approaches would be better.

Matt: Wow. How do we select a doctor? I'm sure they're not all the same. When we had Peter Lamas on, he said that the most expensive was probably going to be the best.

**Dr. Goldberg:** Well, that's not always the case. I think what is the best is the doctor's experience in using all of the available lasers. The questions to ask a physician when one undertakes any cosmetic laser procedure are:

- 1) How often do you do this procedure? and
- 2) Do you rent or own your machines?

(Doctors who purchase the machines have obviously made a commitment to doing this.)

Matt: Well, if it's only been going for like six months to 2 years they couldn't have had a whole lot of experience yet, could they?

**Dr. Goldberg:** Well, you know, it's interesting, with these lunchtime procedures, because they are ten to fifteen minute procedures, because they are fairly easy to do, it's not as if you do one patient a week with this. It's fairly easy within three to four months to have a lot of experience with these machines if they're being used every day.

Mike: They could be leasing too, doctor.

**Dr. Goldberg:** Well, leasing is the equivalent to purchasing. It's kind of like a car. If you buy a car, you may take out a three- year lease. In my view, that's perfectly acceptable. The difference is there are physicians who rent these lasers once every month, once every other month, and obviously they're not going to have the same experience.

Mike: That's very true. The laser causes the pigments to break up and disappear. Is that right?

**Dr. Goldberg:** If we're talking about a laser that's used for age spots or for tattoos that's correct. When we talk about these lunchtime laser procedures, what they are doing is their light is passing through the outer layer of the skin, known as the epidermis, and they're actually creating a wound in the second layer of skin, called the dermis. Because the epidermis has not been removed, no one sees that wound. The body's response to that wound is to place down new, healthy, young, fresh collagen, filling in wrinkles, improving the quality, tone, and texture of the skin.

Matt: Since you don't really cut through the skin at all, do you really consider it surgery?

**Dr. Goldberg:** It depends on how you define surgery. If surgery means cutting the skin, it's not surgery. If surgery means that you still need the expertise of someone who's doing this regularly, if you want to have a good result and minimize the risk of scarring, then it is surgery.

Matt: What would scar? Would it scar on the outside even though you're lasering underneath the surface?

**Dr. Goldberg:** Well, these are very high-powered machines. If they're not used correctly, the heat that's created in that second layer of skin, will actually transmit back to the outer layer.

Matt: Sounds like even a burn or a blister.

**Dr. Goldberg:** It starts as a blister, but it can end as a burn.

Matt: Is there any swelling or pain after a good job you've done?

**Dr. Goldberg:** When these procedures are done correctly, and as I mentioned, they're not difficult to be done correctly as long as one is appropriately trained, there may be a little pinkness to the skin, as if someone exercised or had a glass of wine. But nothing more than that, and that's transient and tends to go away within an hour or two. There's minimal to no swelling at all.

Mike: Right. What about psoriasis? A lot of people have that problem with their skin.

Dr. Goldberg: There's actually a brand new - even newer than these lunchtime laser procedures - there's a brand new laser now that has come to the market for three things. It's used for psoriasis; it's used for vitiligo, a condition in which people lose pigmentation; and it could also be used for scarring that leads to loss of pigmentation. We use it for stable psoriasis, that is, people who have chronic stable psoriasis that often have not responded to other treatments, they will respond to this laser which is known as the excimer laser. And then the same excimer laser can produce pigment in people who have lost it either because of vitiligo or if they've had surgery or an accident. Even in a facelift where they have a scar that has lost pigmentation, we can reproduce some of that pigmentation with this new laser.

(To be continued...)