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FUTURE TRENDS *in aesthetic medicine*

PREJUVENATION' IS THE NEW BUZZWORD AS ATTITUDES CHANGE

One of the only things certain in life is change, and this is especially relevant in the rapidly evolving aesthetics industry. The stigma that was once associated with aesthetic treatments is disappearing fast. Celebrities and influencers promoting the latest trends on social media have hugely increased awareness of aesthetic treatments. Millennials are now approaching 40 and have no qualms about sharing their procedures online. Anyone not having treatments is perceived to be missing out.

"Prejuvenation" is the new buzzword as attitudes change and more people seek preventive aesthetic procedures at earlier ages.

HOLISTIC AESTHETIC MEDICINE

Wellness-driven beauty with a focus on full-body health is transforming aesthetic medicine. Modern doctors evaluate the patient as a whole unit, and include anti-aging treatments, hormone and vitamin replacement, hair restoration, medically controlled weight loss, and even genital rejuvenation, with the goal being to help patients not only look better, but feel better too.

A RISE IN REGULATION

As the aesthetics field has become more lucrative, there has been an increase in the number of treatments performed by non-medical persons without the correct qualifications or using prohibited materials. Regulatory bodies all over the world have begun to take action against such malpractices. International agencies such as the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and locally the HPCSA, SAHPRA and the SA

Pharmacy Council, will be taking a closer look at the aesthetics industry.

AAMSSA is working on practice guidelines and service standards for beauty therapists, somatologists, nurses and clinical associates in the industry. Examples of "grey" areas under scrutiny include microneedling, mesotherapy, needle-free injection devices, plasma devices, and internet purchases of devices and products.

REGENERATIVE AESTHETIC MEDICINE

An emergent market segment internationally is rejuvenation using treatments from the body's own regenerative resources, such as stem-cell therapy. Regenerative medicine incorporates a host of cell-based therapies, including stem cells, biologic products and platelet-rich plasma (PRP).

Although these new therapies show promise, the use of fat for stem cells is complex, and the jury is out on the safe mix of aesthetics and regenerative medicine.

GENETICS AND PERSONALISED PRECISION MEDICINE

The mainstreaming of genetic testing into routine practice allows for patient-tailored treatments. Doctors can now provide personalised interventions and treatments, which allows for more precise, predictable and preventive healthcare. Examples in aesthetic and anti-aging medicine include genetic testing for hair loss, weight loss, detoxification, sun sensitivity, pigmentation, insulin sensitivity and bone health.

INTIMATE REJUVENATION

Vaginal rejuvenation is a treatment that has been growing in popularity. Feminine rejuvenation includes the use of radiofrequency, non-invasive laser treatments,

PRP, fat grafting, stem-cell therapy, dermal fillers, PDO sutures, chemical peels and Botulinum toxin. Recovery time is measured in hours rather than weeks, compared to surgical alternatives. Male sexual rejuvenation is trending too. Men are realising there are new, non-invasive methods for treating erectile dysfunction, as well as for thickening and lengthening their genitalia.

ALTERNATIVES TO ABLATIVE LASER RESURFACING

CO₂ or Erbium lasers are the most commonly used ablative lasers for resurfacing treatments. However, the procedure is very painful, with significant recovery time. An alternative to laser resurfacing is the new Thermo-Mechanical Ablation (TMA) technology, which combines safe and effective collagen induction with an efficient transdermal delivery system.

LIP AUGMENTATION

There is a move towards the "less is more" philosophy when it comes to lip augmentation. The shaping of lips will be more refined and in proportion, with a focus on rejuvenation or asymmetry correction.

THE CORPORATISATION OF AESTHETIC MEDICINE

There has been an increase in the number of large aesthetic med-spa chains worldwide.

AAMSSA is concerned about the corporatisation and demedicalisation of aesthetic medicine, and advises its members to work only in medical settings. There are risks to practising medicine in a spa or salons, and unfortunately, the many HPCSA regulations and guidelines are not always strictly adhered to when a doctor practises in such a setting.

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