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Staying Ahead of the Game

When Taralynn came to see me, she was at a turning point in her life. Having raised her children and dabbled in real estate, she was now ready to embark on a new direction and pursue the modeling career that she had put on hold for many years. Taralynn has always taken good care of herself, eating right and exercising, and just wanted a small confidence boost in the form of a little added vibrancy to her complexion. She was not looking for some extreme makeover, but rather to look age appropriate, and her very best to compete in a highly competitive marketplace. Together, we arrived at a treatment plan that incorporated some of the latest trends in rejuvenation technology and a common sense approach to a home skincare regimen.

Many professionals, myself included, have experienced similar sentiments—while it may be impossible to turn back the clock, it sure would be nice to at least halt it for a while! In today's hard economic times, while experience is important, every little bit counts and factors like appearance and youthfulness influence decisions around hiring and promotions. On some level, we are all seeking harmony between our inner sense of well being and the exterior façade that we project to the world. We do this by exercising, eating right, and sometimes with a little extra help from skin care and rejuvenation professionals. These are not necessarily big things, but rather small interventions that create a refreshed, well rested look of someone in good overall health. So don't throw in the towel quite yet, because fortunately there are many new facial and body enhancing technologies that enable these kinds of subtle transformations!

Many of these age defying technologies not only make us look better, but are good for our skin as well. Additionally, most experts agree that by starting to act early, one can maintain and restore early imperfections before more drastic interventions are necessary. These are treatments that are designed for an active lifestyle, for those who are either working or struggle

with mounting commitments or both—people who simply can't go into hiding for two weeks at a time to recover from some major procedure. Rather, the down time for many treatments is more like an extended weekend.

Fractional laser resurfacing is one of these innovations that should attract everyone's attention. The fractional approach involves peeling or resurfacing the skin in a partial way, by showering the skin with tiny laser spots to create small zones of rejuvenation. Think of it as aerating the skin rather than removing the entire surface layer all at once. The advantages

are many, including a rapid recovery and less risk of side effects while maintaining the benefits of more traditional treatments. Because fractional treatments only partially resurface the skin, more than one treatment session is often necessary. Yet, not all fractional treatments are the same. It is important to consider the wavelength of the laser being used to penetrate the skin. For example, erbium lasers such as Fraxel RePair™ cause the least tissue injury and thus create texture improvement with the least down time. It is used to treat wrinkles, pigment irregularities, and acne scars. The CO2 wavelength is a more aggressive treatment that deposits more heat in the skin and hence causes more inflammation. This translates into more aggressive skin remodeling for more pronounced wrinkles or sun damage, but with slightly more down time.

Resurfacing is not the only advance in skin rejuvenation. Other treatments include non-surgical skin tightening which uses radiofrequency energy to "shrink wrap" the skin. It is not a laser! Think of it as if you were ironing out your wrinkles—without the pain, of course. The treatment entails deep dermal heating while keeping the surface temperature of the skin quite cool. The goal is to cause collagen fibers to contract, followed by secondary stimulation of new collagen synthesis. It is a mild treatment, one that leaves you with a sunburn-like sensation, yet no real downtime, to achieve long-lasting results.

We are fortunate to live in a time when there are so many really great options for rejuvenation. While the downturn in the economy may be a source of hesitation, it may also be all the more reason to pursue treatments that enable us to look and feel our personal best! The price of these treatments is also reasonable, as they are office based and often performed incrementally, without breaking the budget. We look at these changes as healthy skin from the inside out! You can feel good and look great—starting today.



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