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A Review of Skin
Aging Theories

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PRODUCT INNOVATIONS

Palomar's Lux1540 handpiece improves the unsightly color and skin texture associated with stretch marks.

Whether they're the result of growth spurts, pregnancy or weight gain, stretch marks affect millions of women and men. Until now, patients had few options for this obstinate cosmetic problem. They could try invasive surgery or topical retinoids, but with varying degrees of success.

Palomar's Lux1540 handpiece is a fractional nonablative laser, available on the StarLux 500 and Artisan aesthetic systems, that may improve that stretch mark's color and texture.

Three physicians talked with Healthy Aging about how they incorporated the Lux1540 into practice.

HEALTHY AGING: Before the Lux1540, what options could physicians recommend to patients who wanted to reduce their stretch marks?

DR. CHANG: My treatment options primarily involved surgery. The most common procedure I perform to reduce the overall amount of stretch marks is an abdominoplasty. During the course of surgery, stretch marks on the abdominal skin are relocated to a lower area on the abdomen. The result is more of the abdominal skin appears smooth and unaffected.

DR. NARURKAR: Before Lux1540, treatment options were limited to the use of topical retinoids and pulsed dye laser for red striae.

DR. DOHERTY: Prior to this treatment, physicians had few options for these patients beyond surgical excision and intense pulsed light.

HEALTHY AGING: How is the Lux1540 a preferable option for stretch mark treatment?

DR. DOHERTY: Only surgical excision offers 100 percent removal of stretch marks. But the Lux1540 helps improve the appearance of stretch marks by 50 percent to 60 percent. For patients who don't want to undergo surgery, Lux1540 gives them an additional option for improving their stretch marks.

DR. CHANG: The Lux1540 can treat all stretch marks present, not just those isolated to areas that can be surgically removed. I use the Lux1540 as an adjunctive treatment for remaining stretch marks on patients who underwent tummy tucks.

CLINICAL ROUNDTABLE

Striking Out Stretch Marks

DR. NARURKAR: The Lux1540 is a comfortable treatment, which can be performed using topical anesthetic over large areas. The treatment offers reproducible results and can be used on striae of any etiology and maturity, including mature white stretch marks.

HEALTHY AGING: How does the Lux1540 work to reduce the appearance of stretch marks?

DR. CHANG: The Lux1540 delivers nonablative fractionated beams of light to the deepest layers of the dermis while leaving the topmost layer of skin unaffected.

DR. NARURKAR: The controlled heating remodels the collagen and elastin, thereby reducing the appearance of striae.

DR. DOHERTY: Stretch marks are permanent damage to the dermis. The Lux1540 causes controlled damage to the dermis to encourage the skin to grow back thicker and stronger.

HEALTHY AGING: What will patients typically experience during stretch mark treatment?

DR. CHANG: This treatment is very well tolerated in general. Most patients experience a little stinging and heat during the procedure.

DR. DOHERTY: Patients experience minor, temporary discomfort. They'll feel warmth during the procedure and may experience redness after they've gone through treatment.

DR. NARURKAR: Mild erythema may persist for seven to 10 days.

HEALTHY AGING: Which patients are good candidates for stretch mark treatment?

DR. CHANG: The best responders are those with immature, red stretch marks that are widely spaced apart from each other. In general, stretch marks separated by areas of "normal" skin respond well. Patients with lighter Fitzpatrick skin types also have a reduced chance of hyperpigmentation post-procedure.

DR. DOHERTY: Younger, healthier patients tend to see the best results with Lux1540. For example, women who have had a baby within the past six to 12 months do well with this treatment.

DR. NARURKAR: All types of striae will respond well, including mature striae, regardless of origin. In patients with darker skin types, we treat the area with hydroquinone before and after the procedure to prevent hyperpigmentation. ■

ABOUT THE EXPERTS



CAROLYN CHANG, MD, FACS, is a San Francisco-based plastic surgeon specializing in cosmetic surgery. Her areas of expertise include natural facial and post-pregnancy rejuvenation. She is certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery and serves as vice-chairman for the Department of Plastic Surgery at California Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco.



VIC A. NARURKAR, MD, FAAD, is the founder of the Bay Area Laser Institute, in San Francisco. In 2009, he was appointed chairman of dermatology at California Pacific Medical Center, San Francisco's oldest hospital and now one of the largest private academic medical centers in the United States.



SEAN DOHERTY, MD, is a plastic surgeon at Emerson Hospital in Concord, Mass., and at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, Boston. He also serves as assistant medical director for Palomar Inc.