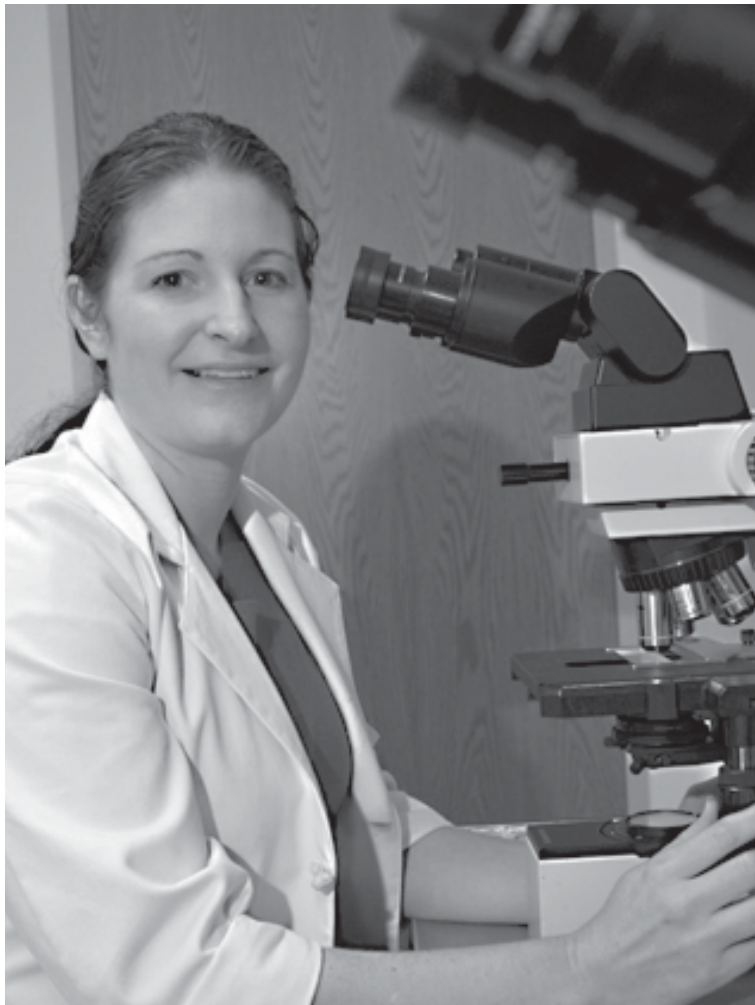


Dr. Briley:
many paths to
rejuvenation
of the skin.



Skin Rejuvenation *in Four Steps*

“As people move into their thirties and forties, they often become aware of wrinkles that are developing and slowly getting deeper and more noticeable.”

From the early teenage years, or even younger, into the later years of life, it's the rare person who does not care about the condition and appearance of their skin, says Dr. Laura Briley of The Dermatology and Skin Cancer Center in Raleigh.

“Rejuvenating the skin, maintaining or restoring its youthful health and glow, becomes of increasing interest as people age and damage to their skin, due largely to unprotected exposure to the sun, becomes more evident.”

Dr. Briley, who herself has blemish-free skin (true of every dermatologist we've met) encourages her patients to think of skin rejuvenation as a three- or perhaps four-step process.

STEP ONE: SUN PROTECTION

“The most important step of all is Step One,” she says, “which is the every day care and protection of the skin from the harmful rays of the sun. This is not difficult to do, it's

not complicated, and the costs are reasonable considering the benefits involved.”

There are two types of sun protection products, chemical and physical agents, she explains. “Chemical sunblocks work by absorbing the energy of UV radiation before it affects your skin, and typically these products need to be applied every several hours to be effective.

“Physical sunblocks reflect or scatter UV radiation before it reaches your skin. The two types of physical sunblocks are zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. Both provide broad spectrum UVA and UVB protection and are gentle enough for everyday use, and typically, when applied, are effective for as long as eight hours. Because these are physical blocking agents and not chemicals, they are especially useful for individuals with sensitive skin, as they rarely cause skin irritation. I most often recommend these physical sunblockers to my patients.”

Using effective skin protection products during the daylight hours is half of Dr. Briley's daily recommended program. “From about the age of 30 on, for women and men, I also recommend the use of Tretinoin or similar products at bedtime, to help increase the collagen in the face. As skin ages, it becomes thinner and less able to hold moisture. Elasticity decreases as collagen and elastin are damaged by time and sunlight. Skin becomes hyperpigmented. Facial muscles atrophy and may become somewhat contracted, contributing to wrinkles.

“Tretinoin, a prescription medication, is a derivative of vitamin A. It works to alter the skin cells by modulating gene expression. The effect of using this product is the speeding of skin cell turnover, reducing breakouts and producing smoother, younger looking skin.”

Using this medication, Dr. Briley points out, “can make the skin sun-sensitive, so it is very important that it always be used in conjunction with an effective sun blocker. Apply Tretinoin at night, the sun blocker in the morning, and you have the basis of an effective skin protection and rejuvenation program.”

STEP TWO: BOTOX

Even with a basic, effective skin care plan, as people move into their thirties and forties “they often become aware of wrinkles that are developing and slowly getting deeper and more noticeable,” says Dr. Briley. “Often, these wrinkles are the result of facial movements. Women especially often tell me that they wake up with a frown on their face that simply wasn't there in their twenties. Now they don't think they're scowling, but when they look in a mirror they see a woman who looks angry—and they're not angry at all. These are patients who are often excellent candidates for Botox—a very safe, uncomplicated procedure. We inject Botox to relax some of the facial musculature, which simply eliminates the unwanted frown. Placement of the injection needs to be carefully done. It's important to know facial anatomy, because the injection has to be directly into the offending muscle. Certainly it's best to do this in a medical setting. Results are effective for three to four months.”

STEP THREE: FILLERS

When patients, usually later in life, have deeper facial lines or wrinkles they would like to soften or eliminate, Dr. Briley may suggest they consider use of the now-popular dermal fillers, such as Juvéderm or Restylane. “With aging, the skin reduces production of a naturally hydrating substance called hyaluronic acid—which results in facial wrinkles and folds around the mouth.

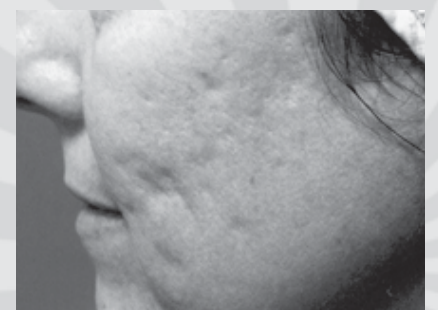
“Both of these injectable products replace hyaluronic acid and restore volume that smoothes out facial wrinkles. For quite some time I've been treating a woman in her sixties for fairly severe psoriasis. She needs to come in regularly for lab work. She decided to get a single treatment of Juvéderm to ease the folds around her mouth, and she was ecstatic with the results. She said the treatment gave her a whole new outlook on life!”

STEP FOUR: FRAXEL

To experience more extensive change on the path to skin rejuvenation, Dr. Briley may introduce patients to Fraxel laser treatments.

“Fraxel is a major step forward in producing dramatic improvement in the appearance and condition of the skin,” she says. “This laser is able to treat thousands of microscopic areas of skin, using pinpoint laser beams that penetrate beneath the skin's surface to eliminate old, damaged skin cells. As a result, it stimulates the body's own natural healing process which replaces damaged skin with fresh, glowing, healthy skin.

“With Fraxel, patients typically experience two levels of results, immediate and progressive. Immediately after initial healing is complete, the surface of the skin will feel softer, look brighter, and tone will start to become even. Progressive results occur over the following three to six months as the deeper layers of skin continue to heal. It's also quite effective in reducing or eliminating acne scars (*see photos*) and reducing or eliminating sun spots and age spots.”



Using the Fraxel laser to remove acne scars.



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