

Tailor Made

Gold Coast **DR JOHN FLYNN** explains to Jodi Thiessen that identifying exactly what the patient wants is often as important as the treatment.

With the variety of facial rejuvenation treatment options available today, the process of finding the best treatment can be daunting for patients. If you are asking yourself – "what treatment is the best one for me?" Stop it. What you should be asking yourself is – "what is it I don't like and really want to change?"

Being clear in your own mind about why you are seeking the advice of a doctor is the first step in identifying the correct treatment. To simplify the process, Gold Coast cosmetic surgeon Dr John Flynn has broken his treatment options down into three areas: Skin Quality, Skin Laxity and Volume and Contour.

"It can be daunting for patients when they read a list of all the different treatments that are available," explains Dr Flynn. "That's why breaking the options down into skin issues and asking the patients to focus on their particular needs are vital elements."

Once this has been done then a treatment plan can be tailored to the individual. "Patients only have to make a decision on which one or combination of those three programmes (skin quality, skin laxity, volume and contour) are suitable and then I can let them know what results are achievable," says Dr Flynn. "The only things they have to identify are the issues that concern them. Then I can recommend a surgical or non-surgical facial

rejuvenation programme with individual elements for their specific needs."

Using Dr Flynn's method and since each procedure is explained in full, it isn't required for the patient to perform detailed research to decide on a treatment in advance, possibly visiting several practitioners in the process. It is often the tailored combination of treatments that gives the best results.

Skin Quality

Skin quality issues are variations in pigmentation, variations in vascular blemishes (like little spider veins or blushed cheeks), and the tone and quality of the skin itself.

"We have our non-surgical skin programme," says Dr Flynn. "This entails a series of microdermabrasion treatments, a series of peels and is usually combined with a topical application such as the retinoids or glycolic or ascorbic acids which the patient uses at home."

Being personally involved in your treatment plan will help you maintain the benefits your skin is gaining in the doctor's office.

Other available options are lasers, both non-ablative and the ablative resurfacing type. Each treats a different problem and can be explained in detail in the consultation.

"The treatment plan depends on the patient. There are

many available options to achieve the best possible result," explains Dr Flynn. "There are topical applications, microdermabrasion, peels and both the ablative and non-ablative lasers so, for any given patient, we can mix and match the procedures to their needs."

Dr Flynn advises that an average treatment plan takes about 6-10 weeks with a half hour treatment every two weeks. "I always explain that it's taken years for the skin to reach this state. We can repair it but it's going to take a bit of time and the patient has a responsibility to play a role in looking after their skin and using sunscreens appropriately so they don't compound the damage."

Looking after skin quality will actually help prevent or postpone the need for surgery. It helps keep the skin rejuvenated. "There are genetic determinants that can't be changed," says Dr Flynn. "But if you look after your skin it does help delay the need for surgical help."

There is little or no down time for a lot of the non-surgical rejuvenation treatments, but laser resurfacing or surgery will, of course, require recovery time. "We've arranged a formula type of approach that is individually tailored to give very good results with little down time."

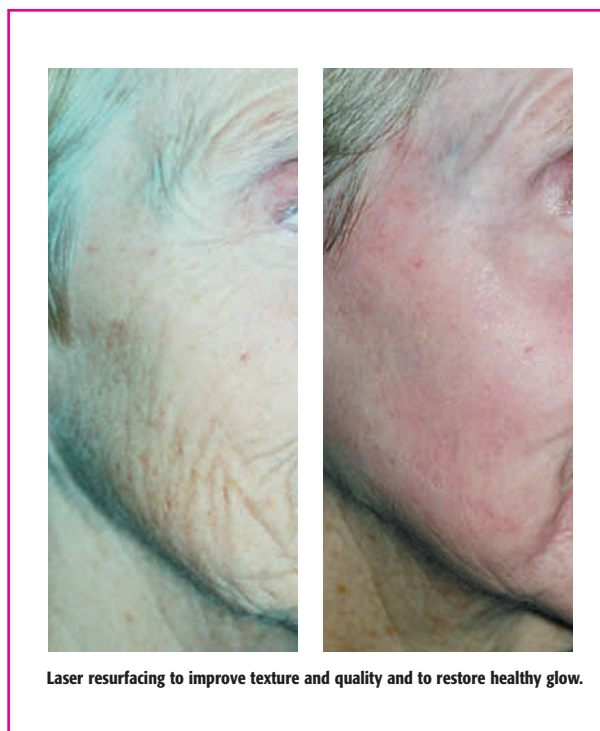
Skin Gravity

Skin gravity issues will almost always require a surgical solution: facelift, necklift, blepharoplasty, browlift etc. Sometimes minor surgical procedures combined with a non-surgical skin rejuvenation plan will give the desired results without the need for major surgery.

Volume and Contour

As we grow older we lose volume in our face and we also lose some bony bulk. "When the doctor is approaching a cosmetic consultation with a patient, he also has to consider issues of volume and contour and this may mean replacing volume in the cheeks to give them a more youthful, fuller look," explains Dr Flynn.

Cheek and chin implants, fat transfer and permanent

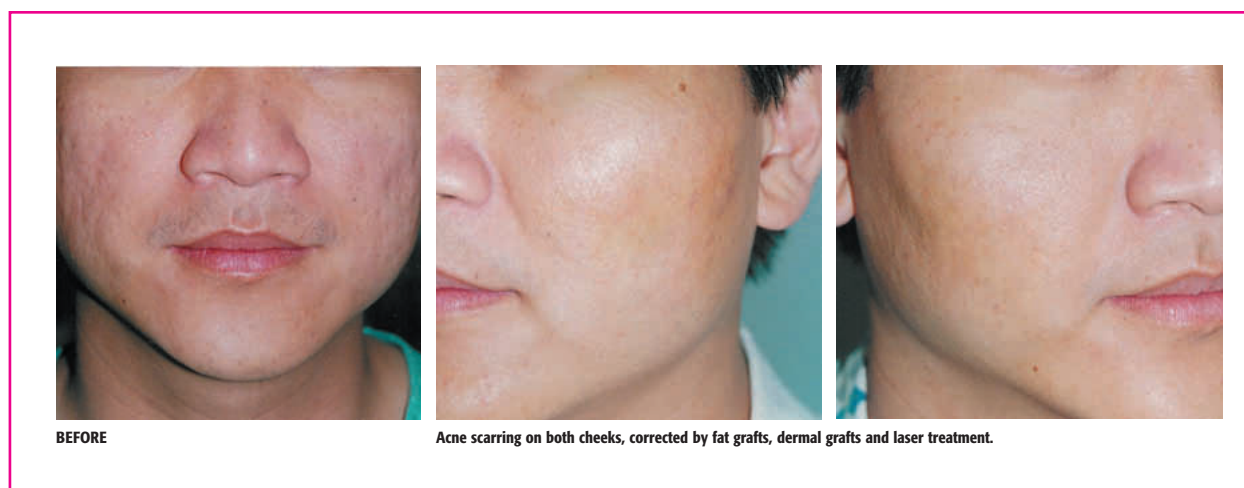


Laser resurfacing to improve texture and quality and to restore healthy glow.

fillers such as Aquamid can really bring back those youthful contours. Once again there is no "best" approach for every person, finding out first what it is you don't like will determine the treatment option.

"Often patients come in and say 'well you're the doctor what do I need?'" exclaims Dr Flynn. "I always respond 'you don't need anything but what is it you would like to change; what don't you like?'"

Don't focus on the product – focus on the problem first. Once this has been identified, the best treatment plan can be tailored to suit your needs. Dr Flynn concludes: "It's never a case of one size fits all. Each patient requires a different combination formula that has been tailored to achieve the best possible results for them." **ACSM**



BEFORE

Acne scarring on both cheeks, corrected by fat grafts, dermal grafts and laser treatment.