

Preface

With the aging baby-boomer population searching for surgical alternatives to aging gracefully, the intertwining of medical treatments and esthetics has become more than just a passing trend. In fact many health care providers have incorporated esthetics into their practices, which can provide a very rewarding ancillary business option to the traditional medical office. However, the perception is often that because something is esthetic, the same level of training and expertise required in other fields isn't necessary for skin. Medical professionals at all levels who receive minimal training accompanied by the purchase of laser equipment are led to believe esthetics is easy because it is "just skin." It is because of this perception, there can be a lack of thorough experience and training, which dermatologists are sought to try to fix unfortunate complications.

In my practice, most of the esthetic services that I do offer have a specific use for disease states. For example, chemical peels to help with keratosis pilaris or acne vulgaris. However, as the industry has expanded, more medical professionals are entering the esthetic industry as physicians are adding esthetic services, including nurses, physician assistants, licensed estheticians and medical assistants. The disease treatment element of many of these procedures is commonly not the primary purpose any longer—rather it has morphed into anti-aging. Krista Bourne is a licensed esthetician who works with me, and her perspective as an esthetician adds a different dimension to this book. With both of our voices, we try to provide information from both the medical and esthetic role as both perspectives are equally important in the rapidly changing esthetic medical industry.

Additionally, with the boom of medical esthetic treatments, physicians are now offering a multitude of home care product lines for their patients. Because it is easy to be overwhelmed by fancy marketing pieces and slick advertising slogans, it is necessary to provide the tools to help make an informed decision on finding safe and effective cosmeceutical products for patients.

Every year I travel both domestically and internationally, speaking at various conferences and trainings. Whenever I speak, a flood of questions follows on often basic information about how the skin functions or how to choose cosmeceuticals. More often than not, I am finally asked if all of this information is written down somewhere. This book is an effort to take over 25 years of practice and research experience, and provide the skin care professional a clinically-focused understanding of the skin, procedures, diseases, conditions and ingredients from a unique perspective.

Not only does this book provide an in-depth look at the skin and how it functions, but we cover topics that are usually not covered in any esthetic training. This includes an extensive review of botanical and synthetic ingredients, how those ingredients interact with the skin and each other, as well as how to practically apply all of this information on a daily basis. Most important, we are trying to teach you how to think for yourself as an educated skin care professional. When you are done reading this book, you will know how to ask questions and interpret the answers in such a way that you can provide the best care for your patient.

While this book in no way purports to replace formal medical training, its purpose is to provide those training to join the esthetics field with a solid foundational knowledge of the intricately complex largest organ of the body—skin. We believe it is the ethical obligation of all medical and skin care professionals to put the needs of the patient first and foremost. The first step is to be willing to continually learn and grow. The information you will find here will help you to do this as well as to become a better practitioner.

