

Applying Laser and Light Lessons from Chile and China to Treat Nuances of Skin Types and Receptiveness Levels in Today's Cosmopolitan Cities

We are so fortunate to live in a time of such technological advancements in laser and light therapy. Many dedicated companies with scientifically rigorous commitments continue to make therapies more efficacious and precise, yet versatile. They've afforded physicians the ability to bring artistry to the practice, dramatically increasing our palette of options when treating the multitude of conditions affecting our most demanding clientele, including acne scars, fine lines, wrinkles, and the overall effects of aging.

As I've traveled to many different countries speaking recently, I've been amazed at the globalization of laser- and light-based treatments. There are clearly nuances to consider with differences not only in ethnicity and skin types, but also the sensitivities and receptiveness to these therapies.

In the United States, patients are incredibly willing to try new antiaging therapies. There comes great responsibility with being granted such trust. Our clients are supplied with an endless summary of treatment options through beauty features on television, in print, and online, which in turn increases the comfort levels with therapeutic advancements. The American culture's added emphasis of a need to be more youthful also drives this thirst for new solutions, and as leaders in this field, we seek the same results we are able to obtain with our clients.

With that being said, we realize that the use of these devices is very particular to the environment in which

we practice. It has been said many times at meetings that laser surgeons on the East Coast are much more likely to refuse to treat clients with tanner skin, while physicians on the West Coast realize we'd be out of a job because all of our patients are tan, driving our needs to make these devices more versatile. With over 300 days of sunshine each year in Las Vegas, it takes a very purposeful patient to not have skin coloration at some point throughout the year.

The Chinese share similar laser equipment and consumer interest in antiaging solutions, acne treatments, botulinum toxins, and fillers. To some extent, their access to delivery systems far outweighs what we have, in that other countries also are courted from laser companies of every continent. The size of their treatment centers more closely resemble small hospitals, and offer dermatology, plastic surgery, and cosmetic dentistry all in one place. However, given their potential, what I found that differs most is their reluctance to use these devices to their potential. This leaves some rather fantastic devices with outstanding abilities only being utilized for some of the most minor procedures. Physicians in China are very timid about more aggressive laser techniques that are more common here.

Chileans are quite the opposite. In Chile, I found physicians who had more limited access to complex equipment, but were more open to new uses, procedures, and indications. Universities brand themselves with medical centers and crave the connection to greater advancements in skin care.

There is no question that our entire world has been affected by the economic events of the last 3 years; however, there is still great demand for technology and progression. People are living longer than ever before and

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yet not wanting to wear our aging souls on our sleeves. This continues to drive a demand in our industry, and I'm finding an even greater push in emerging countries when economic logic might allude otherwise.

In applying these international lessons, the global melting pot of attitudes and receptiveness toward cosmetic treatments can actually be found in each of our practices. Most cities in the United States now have a full range of ethnicities and cultures. We will always find the full range of patients from those who scour electronic sources and bring treatment requests in to us, to those who look to the dermatologist for the best treatment plan. It is important to learn from our colleagues and their vast experiences with different skin types.

We must share best practices with different laser and light sources to continually strengthen our offering. We also must continue to show passion toward training and certification to steer perceptions away from the acceptance of "drive-through skin care" and restore the importance of specialization through highly-educated and skilled providers.

Technology supports our artistry and demand continues to expand our industry. I am thankful for these worldly lessons.

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