

## Devices Can Be Adjuncts to Tx

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growth of cosmetic dermatology in general. The American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery estimates that last year patients in the U.S. spent over \$417 million on laser hair removal and over \$222 million on intense pulsed light (IPL) laser treatment in the physician's office.

The most recent home-device product to emerge is a laser for the treatment of periorbital wrinkles. The de-

vice, which was developed by Palomar Medical Technologies and Johnson & Johnson, received 510(k) over-the-counter clearance from the Food and Drug Administration last month, according to a statement from Palomar. At press time, the companies had not announced the device's name or when it would be on the market.

It joins a small, but growing suite of devices being marketed to U.S. con-

sumers for hair removal, hair growth, acne treatment, and skin cleansing. Prices vary widely, with some devices available for under \$200 and others selling for around \$1,000.

Other dermatologists are embracing at-home devices as a type of line extension for their practices.

Dr. Michael H. Gold, who practices cosmetic, medical, and surgical dermatology in Nashville, Tenn., said that when appropriate, he recommends at-home devices as adjuncts to treatment. He has assessed and selected a few products with good safety and efficacy pro-

files and sells them to patients. He pointed out, however, that he is careful to ensure that patients receive instructions about the safe operation of the devices before they begin using them.

Dr. Gold said that many of the devices have built-in safety features, but he still has concerns. He and his staff



**Patients should receive instructions about the safe operation of the devices before they begin using them.**

DR. GOLD

spend time educating patients about the products, but he said that he is doubtful that happens when consumers purchase the products at retail stores. Dr. Gold disclosed that he is a consultant for the companies that market the skin cleansing device Clarisonic (Pacific Bioscience Laboratories Inc.), the acne treatment device Tanda (Pharos Life Corp.), and the Silk'n home hair removal device.

Even dermatologists who don't sell at-home devices in their offices should try to keep abreast of the latest literature so they can advise patients about which products work, Dr. Farris recommended. "We have to, as dermatologists, be mindful that our patients are also consumers," she said.

These at-home products are likely to be the way of the future, provided they take hold with consumers and are priced to move in the stalled economy, she added. ■



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## Patient Education Site Is Launched

A new patient-oriented Web site, "Explore Your Skin," is designed to provide general educational materials for patients about how skin diseases occur and how cosmetic procedures are performed. The interactive site is available in both English and Spanish. The Web site does not contain promotional messages. For more information, visit [www.exploreyourskin.com](http://www.exploreyourskin.com). ■

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