

# DERMASCOPE

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## Skin Care Ingredients as Surgery Alternatives



by Irena James

**E**arlier this year, the American Society for Aesthetic Plastic Surgery (ASAPS), released its 17<sup>th</sup> annual multi-specialty statistical data, indicating a 12 percent overall increase in cosmetic procedures performed in the United States in 2013. According to ASAPS, Americans spent the largest amount on cosmetic surgery since the great recession of 2008.<sup>1</sup> More than 11 million cosmetic surgical and non-surgical procedures were performed by board-certified plastic surgeons, dermatologists, and otolaryngologists, totaling over \$12 billion.

Of the \$12 billion spent, more than \$7 billion was spent on surgical procedures, while more than \$5 billion was spent on non-surgical procedures. The top five surgical procedures were liposuction, breast augmentation, eyelid surgery, tummy tuck, and nose surgery. The top five nonsurgical procedures were botulinum toxin, hyaluronic acid, hair removal, microdermabrasion, and photo-rejuvenation.

With clients' increased and sustained interest in surgical and non-surgical procedures, products promising to mimic and/or support the results of these procedures are also in high demand, more so now than ever before.

Well over 500 *anti-aging* products were launched over the past five years containing the word 'surgery' in their product descriptions, representing about 0.2 percent of the anti-aging product category. Even though this market is still considered a niche market, it has been growing exponentially – 48 percent per year on average – with market leaders in the United Kingdom, United States, and France among some of the biggest players in the world of beauty.

Judging by the claims some of these new generation surgery-free products are touting, they may present a viable alternative to both surgical and non-surgical procedures.

### Wrinkle Fillers and Crease Plumpers

Not everybody is comfortable with the idea of having collagen, hyaluronic acid, or their own fat from plumper body areas injected into their nasolabial folds or deep creases. Most women prefer to fight wrinkles in a less-invasive way.

Many new ingredients, mainly from the peptide and protein category, have emerged over the last decade to respond to this demand. Some work by increasing the volume of the dermal tissue, re-plumping creases from the inside, while others mimic retinoid activity that thickens the dermis and protects volumizing proteins from being destroyed by matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs).

Sederma's newest addition to the Matrixyl® range, Matrixyl® synthe'6®, exceeds expectation in this category by filling in wrinkles from the inside out, both on the forehead and on crow's feet, for visibly smoother, plumper skin. Thanks to its matrikine-like effect, Matrixyl® synthe'6® stimulates six major constituents of the skin matrix and the dermal-epidermal junction (DEJ), ensuring an optimal architecture of the tissue. In vivo studies have demonstrated that after just two months, forehead and crow's feet wrinkles are visibly smoothed from the inside of the skin. Many parameters such as wrinkle volume, depth, and surface were used to demonstrate this smoothing and lifting effect.

Matrixyl® synthe'6® can be found in eye care formulas, serums, and targeted products for expression lines and wrinkles, as well as in global anti-aging formulas. Both big and small cosmetic manufacturers have embraced this ingredient as an ultimate workhorse, often providing the bulk of the anti-aging benefits in their formulas and producing compelling results that keep their clients coming back for more.

### Expression-Relaxers And Botulinum-Rivals

According to the ASAPS report, botulinum toxin (including Botox, Dysport, and Xeomin) remained the most frequently performed noninvasive procedure in 2013, with a 15.6 percent increase overall. Still, a large percentage of our clients will be attracted to skin care treatments offering needle-free, line-relaxing results. While Botox smoothes wrinkles by paralyzing muscles with an injection of a solution derived from botulinum toxin, topical Botox alternatives attempt to mimic its effects on various mechanisms involved in muscle contraction.

Most of us who have bought or sold age-fighting skin care over the last decade have become familiar with Argireline and SNAP-8™, two well-established line-relaxing peptides that target dynamic, mechanical wrinkles. Both work on muscle contraction inhibition to reduce the depth of wrinkles caused

by the contraction of the muscles used for facial expressions, especially in the forehead and around the eyes.

Some unusually-sourced ingredients have also been enlisted to achieve needle-free smooth skin. One of which, Syn-Ake (dipeptide diaminobutyroyl), mimics the venom of the temple viper snake, causing muscle paralysis by inhibiting neurotransmitters from entering the muscle receptor site and destabilizing the cell in order to keep it from releasing the neurotransmitters that make the muscles contract.

While these ingredients can certainly produce impressive results, the percentages used in a given formula, as well as the delivery systems and the frequency of product application, also play a crucial part in the results an individual might obtain. Usually, results will build up over a period of two to four weeks, at which point they often peek. If the client continues using well-formulated product, the results will remain visible for as long as the product is regularly applied, even for a period of time after regular use has stopped.

One of the most interesting new ingredients in this category comes from Activen SA, a Swiss biotechnology company specializing in drug discovery with impressive know-how concerning bioactive substances such as poisons, venoms, and toxins for healthcare purposes, pharmacology, and cell targeting. With the understanding that nature offers endless inspiration for sophisticated ingredient technology, Activen's "raison d'être" is to provide the beauty industry with active ingredients selected from nature for their potent and selective activity.

Known for their expertise in neuropharmacology, Activen SA has recently introduced XEPTM-018, a biomimetic conopeptide from cone snail venom with powerful myorelaxing activity. This conopeptide acts as a modulator of the neuromuscular transmission and a potent and selective blocker of the voltage-gated sodium channel Nav1.4, providing immediate and medium-term relaxation in the areas of dynamic wrinkles. XEPTM-018 offers not only instant skin surface smoothing, especially on deep wrinkles, but also introduces a new sub-category of medium-term line-relaxing, whereby results get better and better within hours of initial application. Thus, the transforming, softening, and fading of deep expression lines as the hours go by, providing an unprecedented, gradual Cinderella effect as skin transforms into tighter, smoother, more beautiful, and line-free right before your client's eyes.

### Non-Surgical Eyelid Lift

Blepharoplasty, surgical excision of excess eyelid, has become the most common facial operation over the last 20 years. For the first time in the history of cosmetics, a cosmetic ingredient offers a gentle and non-invasive alternative to blepharoplasty. Sederma recently introduced Beautifeye™, the first active ingredient of its kind demonstrated to have a lifting action on the sagging upper eyelid. The clinically-tested synergistic blend of two plant extracts, Persian silk tree and holy herb, reduces drooping orbital surfaces by 61 percent and lifts sagging upper eyelid folds up to 91 percent after two months of treatment. In addition to this breakthrough action, Beautifeye™

visibly smoothes crow's feet wrinkles, decreasing their volume and depth, while fading dark circles and lessening the intensity of red and blue coloration. A consumer study of 105 volunteers demonstrated that in only seven days, Beautifeye™ was able to positively influence the way volunteers perceived the features of their face. By treating the area around the eyes with a holistic approach, thanks in particular to an unprecedented action of lifting the upper eyelid, Beautifeye™ enables the eyes to rediscover their youthful expression and freshness, while delaying the need for surgical intervention.<sup>2</sup>

### Improving Your Selfies - See Your Surgeon and Aesthetician

According to a new study by the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, the rise of "selfies" has prompted more people to seek plastic surgery. One in three of the facial plastic surgeons surveyed saw an increase in requests for procedures due to clients being more self-aware of their looks from social media. It is safe to assume that as demand for surgery increases, a great number of those researching surgical and non-surgical procedures will also want to consider their alternatives and develop interest and curiosity in products offering a non-invasive approach, creating a very unique opportunity to capitalize on this niche market. The surgery-free concept is truly intergenerational, as it appeals both to mature clientele desiring a younger look and to young adults who naturally want to stay young forever.

Surgery-free concepts and marketing campaigns have traditionally been built on the premise that for most, surgery is scary, expensive, and improbable, while products promising surgery-like skin enhancements are non-invasive and can fit most people's budgets. The fact of the matter is that as the demand for surgical and non-surgical procedures continues to grow, so will the demand for these products. However, as medical, skin care, and spa services continue to merge and join forces in battling the signs of aging, surgical and non-surgical procedures, as well as needle-free plumping and alternatives to peels and lasers, may very well be accepted as a natural progression of the expanded options skin care professionals can now offer to clients.

#### References:

- <sup>1</sup> American Academy of Plastic Surgery, (2013). Plastic Surgery Statistics Report. Web.
- <sup>2</sup> Ezure, T. and Amano, S., (2010). Sederma Press Release, Beautifeye: Young around the clock. 16: 202-209.

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*As Director of Product Development for YG Laboratories, Irena James has educated generations of students and industry peers on skin care ingredients, treatment protocols, and brand development. James' versatile experience in the skin care industry spans over 20 years, during which she worked as an aesthetician, educator, territory sales manager, and director of business development in the EU. She is an assistant instructor at the UCLA Extension Cosmetic Sciences Program and a member of BIW and the Society of Cosmetic Chemists.*

