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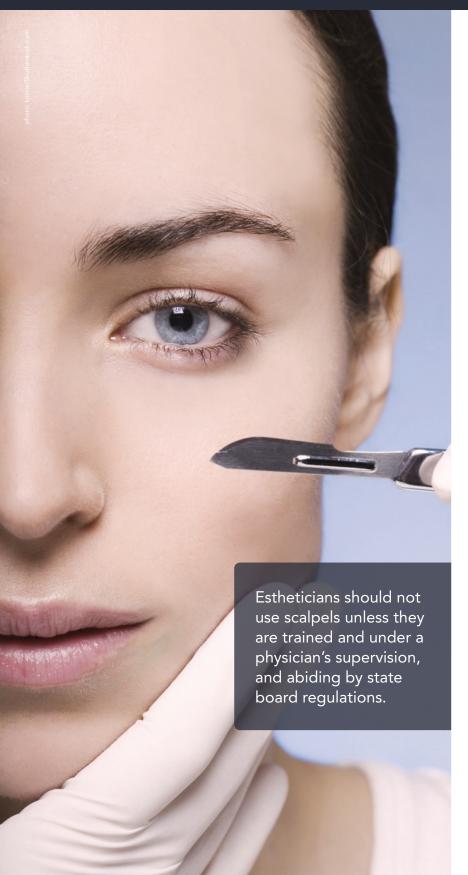


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dermaplaning



the same services as medical doctors. As estheticians, we cleanse and massage the skin, exfoliate superficial layers from the face and wax unwanted hair away. Estheticians and esthetic nurses can receive advanced training in specific services within a physician's practice, depending on the state regulation of esthetic licensing.

As skin care services evolve to meet the needs and demands of the clientele, maintaining a safe environment within your scope of practice may have developed some "gray" areas. One of these "gray" areas concerns dermaplaning, a process that can be so advanced it can be referenced as a medical procedure, may be performed as a superficial exfoliation treatment, or can be something as simple as shaving. My ultimate perspective on the issue of dermaplaning is: what is safe for the client and within my scope of practice? Yet, is seems as though estheticians do not have a unified voice in defining this procedure and the tools we have to perform it. The process of dermaplaning needs to be defined for both the medical and esthetic scope of practice to ensure the safety of those who receive this treatment.

Definition

Within the medical community (particularly plastic surgeons), dermaplaning is viewed as a noninvasive surgical procedure that can essentially strip away dead skin to improve the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles and acne scarring. The technique may be used synonymously with dermabrasion (not to be mistaken for microdermabrasion) on many medical websites and patents—hence the name "derma," relating to the dermis, and "planing" from the word plane that refers to a tool used to smooth a surface. The most commonly used tool is a type of scalpel, a surgeon's tool that can cause irreversible damage if used improperly.

Many estheticians and dermatologists suggest women shave their face to help keep the skin rejuvenated, but in the treatment room it is still referred to as dermaplaning.

Estheticians should not use scalpels unless they are trained and under a physician's supervision, and abiding by state board regulations. This is ultimately for the safety of the client.

From an esthetic perspective, dermaplaning has been performed with a scalpel or a disposable safety razor. Some practices may advertise dermaplaning as an exfoliation treatment, while others use the procedure for hair removal. An esthetic skin care practice should use a disposable safety razor or an eyebrow razor. This tool is sold in public drugstores; it equips a special blade to help prevent skin lacerations, and is housed in a plastic casing so it may function as a single-use item. As with any shaving process, very superficial dead skin cells may be exfoliated while the technique is being performed; however, it is not outside an esthetician's scope of practice to exfoliate very

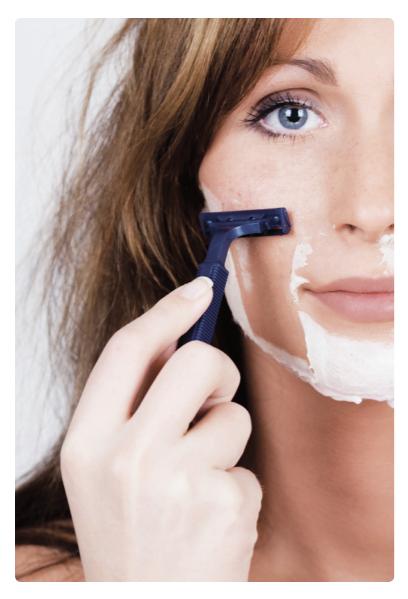
superficial layers of dead skin. For example, as a skin care practitioner and licensed esthetician, I have shaved the vellus hair off as opposed to waxing, a process many estheticians refer to as dermaplaning. About a year ago, the State of Texas Cosmetology Board announced that only barbers are licensed to shave the face, limiting the legal practice of dermaplaning to barbers. Recently, the Florida Cosmetology Board ruled that it does not allow dermaplaning unless it is performed by a medical professional. However, Arizona allows estheticians to dermaplane, a process referred to as "epidermal leveling" or "microplaning."

Necessity

Dermaplaning is necessary in an esthetic practice because of client demands and needs. Hormonal changes in women affect the skin and body, and esthetic dermaplaning essentially shaves vellus hair from the face. Aside from a loss of elasticity, skin thinning and dryness, vellus hair on the face becomes a visible problem on middle-aged women. Their makeup does not set well, and they feel "wooly" and aged. Facial waxing is still a common practice for the removal of this hair, but the procedure is prone to many problems. The hair is so fine that gentle facial waxes may not pick it all up, and a mature woman's skin may be more susceptible to burning or tearing. Combine these variables with exfoliation treatments, cosmeceutical skin care product use at home, and/or use of certain prescription drugs—and the risk of damaging the skin and causing discomfort is even greater. Damages to the client's skin or to their overall appearance after a hair removal service prompt some of the most prevalent lawsuits we experience as skin care providers today.

Another option that may not be accessible to most estheticians is laser or intense pulsed light (IPL) hair removal methods. These light-based treatments may not capture the pigment of the hair and remove the hair effectively without consequences to the skin. In comparing the three main methods of hair removal for this client type, dermaplaning is obviously the better suited. Since its transition and essential transformation into the esthetic industry, it has become a widely sought-after procedure for clientele who have experienced the different hair removal methods.

continues





Many esthetics professionals feel that state legislation should not outlaw dermaplaning by estheticians; but rather that it should outline the boundaries so that clients can receive a safe hair removal treatment from a licensed skin care professional.

So, is it shaving?

Having presented the options, why not just call it shaving? As a skin care provider, you can poll your clients: would they rather go to the barber to have their vellus hair removed? Women shave their legs and underarms. Men shave their face. As mentioned previously, in Texas only licensed barbers are allowed to shave the face. The other way to ask the question could be: would you be more likely to see your skin care provider to contour and define your facial features with a dermaplaning procedure or a shave?

Many estheticians and dermatologists actually suggest women shave their face to help keep the skin rejuvenated, but in the treatment room it is still referred to as dermaplaning. As simple as the process may seem, there is nothing inherently feminine about a woman shaving her face, although rumor has it that Elizabeth Taylor and Marilyn Monroe did so to exfoliate their skin and make it radiant. A recent online survey from The Huffington Post asks, "Would you shave your face? (Ladies only!);" the percentages at the time this article was written were 46.4 percent "yes" and 53.6 percent "no" (as an online post, these numbers may have since changed). Determining whether or not a woman shaving her face is socially acceptable may not have a solid answer today. Some women only shave when their significant other is not looking, some shave next to their significant other, and some will not even entertain the thought—even though they may have had dermaplaning performed by their skin care provider. The status quo has not settled on whether or not it is acceptable, but that may change in the future. Most public information about female shaving focuses on the exfoliation aspects, and how it gives the skin a refined appearance and healthy glow; the hair removal is just another perk that comes with the process. In the meantime, dermaplaning with a disposable, single-use safety razor or eyebrow razor in the treatment room is the safer alternative to facial waxing or light-based hair removal.

The fine print

Ultimately, the formal process of dermaplaning is not applicable to esthetic practices, even though it has evolved from its inception decades ago. The San Diego Entertainer Magazine published an article called, "Should Women Shave for Smoother Skin?" It included this quote from a nurse who worked for a San Diego plastic surgeon: "I see a remarkable improvement in my client's skin after I perform dermaplaning, which is almost exactly what shaving does."

The only difference may be that a nurse under a physician's care would use a scalpel, not a disposable safety razor, and they would plane the face as an exfoliating procedure, not just for hair removal. Many esthetics professionals feel that state legislation should not outlaw dermaplaning by estheticians; but rather that it should outline the boundaries so that clients can receive a safe hair removal treatment from a licensed skin care professional. Yes, shaving exfoliates the skin, but it is not outside an esthetician's scope of practice to exfoliate some superficial layers of skin. As estheticians, we should offer this option in addition to facial waxing, which may cause damage to some clients' with fragile or sensitive skin. Replacing waxing with shaving in these cases helps us avoid potential lawsuits and loss of business.



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