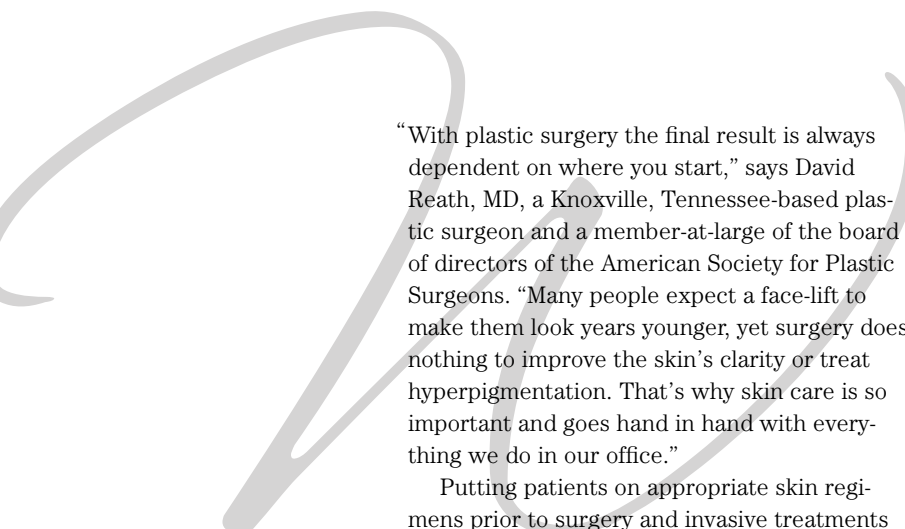


# Preparing The Canvas

BY CANDY T. CUENCO

AKIN TO AN ARTIST CAREFULLY PREPARING BRUSHES AND PAINTS, FINDING JUST THE RIGHT LIGHTING AND METICULOUSLY SMOOTHING HIS CANVAS, A COSMETIC SURGEON TAKES MUCH CARE IN PREPPING PATIENTS FOR INVASIVE PROCEDURES, SUCH AS ABLATIVE RESURFACING OR FACE-LIFTS.

BethImages\*



“With plastic surgery the final result is always dependent on where you start,” says David Reath, MD, a Knoxville, Tennessee-based plastic surgeon and a member-at-large of the board of directors of the American Society for Plastic Surgeons. “Many people expect a face-lift to make them look years younger, yet surgery does nothing to improve the skin’s clarity or treat hyperpigmentation. That’s why skin care is so important and goes hand in hand with everything we do in our office.”

Putting patients on appropriate skin regimens prior to surgery and invasive treatments speeds up the healing process, minimizes scarring and lowers the risk of discoloration.

“It’s very important that patients use medical skin care prior to surgery,” says Bobbi Hamilton, lead medical esthetician at SK Sanctuary in La Jolla, California. “We know that patients who comply with their home-care program and have peels prior to surgery heal faster and experience less downtime.”

### Doctor Recommended

Dr. Reath and his staff are proponents of using the Results Rx line prior to facial plastic surgery due to its chiral properties and its state-of-the-art ingredients: epidermal growth factors, peptides, AGP complex and specialized botanicals.

“When we engage a patient in a proper skin-care regimen, she will notice improved skin texture, returning elasticity, smaller pores, less noticeable discoloration, a brighter complexion and a reduction in fine wrinkles,” Dr. Shafaei explains.

Lisa Danielle Grunebaum, MD, an assistant professor of facial plastic and reconstructive surgery at the University of Miami Cosmetic Group, recommends a prescription topical retinoid product to upregulate collagen production preoperatively. “I feel that patients can use this product right up to the day before surgery,” says Dr. Grunebaum. For patients whose skin is too sensitive for a prescription-strength retinoid, she considers the following products as good alternatives: RoC Retinol Correxion Deep Wrinkle Night Cream and a topical antioxidant such as SkinCeuticals C, E Ferrulic Serum. “Of course, sunscreen remains a vital part of any skincare regimen. My favorite is Neutrogena Ultrasheer SPF 45,” she adds.

### Recipe for Success

When it comes to choosing the right preoperative topical, it’s all about the ingredients. While most of the doctors we talked to prescribe retinoid products, Leslie Baumann, MD, director of the University of Miami Cosmetic Group and au-

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“It contains the highest available concentrations of active ingredients delivered by Fullersomes,” Dr. Reath says. “Which means, a little goes a long, long way.”

Farrokh Shafaei, MD, a plastic surgeon in Summit, New Jersey, recommends products from the Adorage MD line to prepare the patient’s skin for the stress of plastic surgery and ensure her comfort afterward. The presurgical regimen involves an application of hyaluronic acid followed by a moisturizing cream and, for those with very dull and aged skin, anti-stress serum and cream.

thor of several books on skincare including *The Skin Type Solution*, adds something extra to the mix. “I add antioxidants when I give them retinoid. It helps prevent the redness and scaling. Replenix CF Cream is my favorite,” says Dr. Baumann. Prior to any treatment, Dr. Baumann also advises patients to take an arnica montana supplement and to avoid aspirin, ibuprofen, green tea and vitamin E to minimize bruising.

Strict sun avoidance for at least a month is part of the regimen that Jeannette Graf, MD, puts her patients through prior to deep laser resurfacing or plastic surgery. Graf, a board-

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### IN TIPTOP SHAPE

Priming the skin prior to cosmetic procedures is crucial to achieving optimal results and a quicker recovery. Here's a list of topicals and supplements designed specifically to prep the skin before invasive treatments:

X-Cellerate by **Results Rx** is a corrective treatment using L-arbutin and AGP Complex to stimulate fibroblasts and even out skin tone in preparation for laser/surgical procedures. Its chirally correct formula is a nonirritating alternative to hydroquinone.  
Contact:  
877.367.7975,  
resultsrx.com



**Biopelle Auriderm** Clearing Gel can help reduce the appearance of spider veins and, if used prior to sclerotherapy, can reduce needed treatment. It contains vitamin K oxide to treat the hemosiderin staining associated with chronic purpura and helps to strengthen blood vessel walls.  
Contact:  
866.424.6735,  
biopelle.com



**La Roche-Posay Exfozyme** is a professional-grade medical mask that prepares skin for in-office procedures and maintaining it afterward. Its exclusive Thermo-Enzymatic Technology deeply exfoliates dead skin cells and opens pores to help remove excess sebum.  
Contact: 888.577.5226,  
laroche-posay.us



**GLISODin** Advanced Pre/Post Formula supports skin for noninvasive as well as more invasive cosmetic surgeries. According to the company, the administration of nutraceutical formulations, antioxidants and immune enhancing agents before and after treatments can reduce recovery time and improve aesthetic results. The system is separated into two phases: Phase One supports noninvasive aesthetic procedures such as mesotherapy, laser hair removal, and fillers and injectables, among others. For patients undergoing more invasive procedures such as a face-lift, breast augmentation and others, doctors recommend both Phase One and Two, which contain amino acids and complementary ingredients like NutraFlora, L-glutamine, vitamin C, glucosamine sulphate, L-arginine and rutin. Contact: 866.534.5868, glisodinskin.com



certified clinical and research dermatologist based in Great Neck, New York suggests a combination of tretinoin cream and hydroquinone (Tri-Luma) at night to prevent post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. "I have female patients wear Jane Iredale mineral makeup over a sunscreen to enhance their sun protection," says Dr. Graf. "Before laser resurfacing it is quite helpful to perform glycolic peels at the start of Tri-Luma treatment and one week before the procedure to create as even an epidermal surface as possible." She also suggests that patients drink plenty of water and cut down on sugar, alcohol and cola drinks since they are acid producers. "To optimize health and alkalinity I recommend plenty of organic fruits and vegetables with a supplemental powdered green drink daily—'an alkalizing cocktail.' Pre-operatively, I have patients take Arnika-Forte from DermAvance to minimize bruising," explains Dr. Graf.

At SK Sanctuary, they use a variety of medical products to prepare the skin for laser resurfacing and plastic surgery. According to Hamilton, the ingredients they look for in prepping the skin include: hydroquinone 4%, AHAs, topical vitamin C, polyphenols, retinols and human growth factors. These ingredients, she says, have been tested in controlled clinical studies for safety.

At Wellquest Medical Clinic and Spa, they are partial to ingredients that promote hydration, says Molly Meredith, lead licensed esthetician at the Bentonville, Arkansas-based facility. "Glycerin is a great humectant and we use sodium lactate a lot," she explains. "We also recommend ingredients that stimulate lipid production, such as ursolic acid."

### Holistic Programs

At Wellquest Medical Clinic and Spa, patients undergo Skinprint facial analysis to determine the skin's condition. Practitioners use that information to formulate home-care products. Says Meredith, "Through proper analysis, we identify the actual 'causes' of the patient's skin concerns and that allows proper treatment to take place. Sometimes a patient may come in saying, 'I want a laser peel,' and their primary concern is redness in the skin. When we analyze and find a combination of facial veins and bacteria causing the redness, we can recommend custom home care to address bacteria, custom facials to prep the skin and broadband light to treat the facial veins."

It is common for practitioners at Wellquest to recommend customized facials prior to or the day of laser treatments even if the skin is well hydrated or

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**Sesha Skin** De-Mela Lotion prevents hyperpigmentation caused by heat from plastic surgery and other treatments like lasers, peels or dermabrasion. Its patented AMHP complex suppresses the formation of tyrosinase by inhibiting MC1R receptors on cell members. It also contains potent antioxidants and FDA-approved transdermal delivery technology. Patients can use it daily as a moisturizer two to three weeks prior to aggressive treatment. Contact: 888.977.3742, seshaskin.com



**Physicians Complex** offers topical solutions designed for faster surgical healing. Its Microdermabrasion Cream is formulated to exfoliate the skin and is ideal for use before Fraxel, IPL and other procedures. Its 6% Skin Bleaching Cream combines hydroquinone, kojic acid and bearberry extract. Contact: 800.826.4480, physicianscomplex.com

**Skinprint** is a patent-pending process that provides personalized analysis and skin care prescriptions to enhance the efficacy and comfort of laser treatments. The pre-regimen consists of a light foaming cleanser and a pre-laser lotion containing sodium lactate. The post-regimen includes a foaming cleanser to enhance corneocyte removal without damaging the skin's barrier and either a lotion or an ointment containing highly occlusive moisturizers and other ingredients. Contact: 800.234.1308, skinprint.com



**J Pak System No. 1** is a homeopathic remedy used before and after aesthetic injections to help minimize swelling and bruising. Created by Andrew Jacono, MD, facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon at the New York Center for Plastic and Laser Surgery, the system contains concentrated doses of arnica montana and the dietary supplement bromelain. Contact: 212.570.2500, JPAKSystems.com



Recommended by physicians and dermatologists before laser resurfacing or plastic surgery, the **Glytone Clarifying System's** combination of 4% hydroquinone and Avène Rétrinal cream reduces hyperpigmentation and melasma, diminishes fine lines and wrinkles, and improves skin smoothness and texture. It's available in Normal to Dry or Normal to Oily kits. Contact: 800.459.8663, glytone.com

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## RESOURCES

**Adorage:** 201.886.7000, adorage.md.com  
**Jane Iredale:** 800.762.1132, janeiredale.com  
**Neutrogena:** 800.582.4048, neutrogena.com  
**Replenix:** 877.582.4048, skincares.com  
**RoC:** 800.762.1964, rocskincare.com  
**Skinprint:** 800.234.1308, skinprint.com  
**DermAvance:** 610.727.3935, dermavance.com

has a healthy barrier. She says the facials allow them to properly prep the skin to increase efficacy of the advanced treatment. "Facials are also relaxing to the patient, make the treatment more enjoyable and ease any stress about the procedure," she adds.

Wellquest might also recommend skin-lightening products, especially for those with melasma or those prone to skin discoloration. These products are either custom formulated by the Skinprint lab or, in more severe cases, prescribed by the medical director.

Scott Wells, MD, of Skin NY, New York, believes that any comprehensive plan to repair skin damage must first begin with a plan to prevent ongoing damage. His Skin Refabrication system, which he refers to as "a gym membership for the skin," involves topicals such as retinols, antioxidants and protective formulations. In conjunction with proper skin nutrition, he says that an effective regimen of "exercises" is beneficial in maintaining optimal skin health and fitness and explains that the trend of using laser and/or light-based therapies to simulate the body's inherent repair processes is one of the most exciting new directions in skin care and antiaging. The basis for these therapies involves either injuring the skin in a minor or controlled fashion, or "tricking" the skin into thinking it has been injured.

"In this way, it can be understood that this is a physiologic and ongoing process more 'organic' than single treatment therapies," Dr. Wells says. "A good analogy to understand this process is to visualize the structural integrity of our skin as a brick wall. If we can slow the rate by which the bricks are popping out of the wall and simultaneously speed up the rate and efficiency of the bricklayer replacing the lost bricks, we can better maintain the integrity and appearance of that structure. A potential cosmetic surgery candidate may consider Skin Refabrication to improve her skin's quality prior to surgery, optimizing the fabric to improve the tailoring."

Whether the long-term goal is a complete face-lift or ablative skin resurfacing, these experts agree that the only way to end up with a flawless finish is to begin with a fresh, smooth canvas. ■

*Candy T. Cuenco is managing editor of MedEsthetics.*