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Dermatology





Table of Contents

September Skin Care: Your Skin's Fresh Start This Fall	Pg. 2
Fraxel Laser Treatment: The Gold Standard for Skin Rejuvenation	Pg. 7
Understanding Skin Pigmentation Disorders	Pg. 12

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September Skin Care: Your Skin's Fresh Start This Fall

Summer's blazing heat is behind us, school routines are settling in, and your skin might be sending you some mixed signals. September marks **National Skin Care Awareness Month**, making it the perfect time to reset your skin care routine and address the aftermath of sun-soaked days and busy schedules.

Your skin has weathered months of UV exposure, chlorine from pool days, and perhaps some neglected evening routines during those late summer nights. Now, as cooler weather approaches and schedules become more structured, your skin deserves some dedicated attention.

This month offers an ideal opportunity to assess what's working, what isn't, and how seasonal changes affect your skin's needs. Whether you're dealing with

lingering sun damage, preparing for drier fall air, or simply looking to establish better daily habits, September's timing couldn't be more strategic for a skincare refresh.

Why September Is Perfect for Skin Care Focus

The transition from summer to fall creates unique conditions that make September an optimal month for skin care evaluation and renewal. Your skin has likely accumulated damage from increased sun exposure, vacation disruptions to your routine, and summer activities that may have thrown your usual regimen off track.

Post-Summer Skin Assessment

Summer leaves its mark on everyone's skin differently. Some people notice increased pigmentation from sun exposure, while others deal with breakouts from heavy sunscreens or sweat. The key is conducting an honest assessment of your skin's current state.

Look for signs of sun damage like dark spots, uneven tone, or new freckles. Check for dehydration, which often manifests as tightness or flakiness. Notice any texture changes or areas where your skin feels different than it did in spring.

Preparing for Seasonal Changes

Fall brings lower humidity levels and



cooler temperatures, which means your skin's moisture needs will shift significantly. The sebum production that might have felt overwhelming in summer heat could become insufficient as indoor heating systems start running and outdoor air becomes drier.

This transitional period gives you time to gradually introduce products that will serve you well through fall and winter, rather than waiting until your skin is already compromised by harsh weather conditions.

Creating Your September Skin Care Reset

A successful skin care reset doesn't require throwing out everything you own and starting fresh. Instead, focus on strategic adjustments that address your skin's current needs while preparing for the months ahead.

Step 1: Evaluate Your Current Routine

Take inventory of the products you've been using consistently and honestly assess their effectiveness. Which products made your skin feel great? Which ones caused irritation or seemed to have no effect at all?

Pay special attention to how your skin responds to different products at different times of day. Your morning routine needs might differ significantly from your evening requirements, especially as daylight hours begin to shorten.

Step 2: Address Summer Damage

If you notice signs of sun damage, now is the time to address them before they become more pronounced. Vitamin C serums can help brighten dark spots,



while gentle exfoliation can improve skin texture and promote cell turnover.

Consider incorporating products with ingredients like niacinamide, which can help regulate oil production and improve skin tone, or hyaluronic acid to restore moisture that may have been lost during summer activities.

Step 3: Prepare for Fall Weather

Start introducing richer moisturizers gradually, even if your skin doesn't seem to need them yet. This proactive approach helps your skin adjust slowly rather than experiencing the shock of suddenly switching to heavy products when cold weather hits.

Look for moisturizers with ceramides or squalane, which help strengthen your skin's natural barrier function. These ingredients become increasingly important as environmental conditions become more challenging for maintaining healthy skin.

Building Sustainable Skin Care Habits

National Skin Care Awareness Month isn't just about products—it's about developing consistent habits that support long-term skin health. The key is creating routines that feel manageable within your lifestyle.

Morning Routine Simplicity

Your routine should be streamlined and

efficient, especially as school and work schedules become more demanding. Focus on cleansing, protection, and hydration as your core steps.

A gentle cleanser removes overnight buildup without stripping your skin. Follow with a lightweight moisturizer that absorbs quickly, and always finish with broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher. This simple three-step routine takes less than five minutes but provides essential protection and care.

Evening Routine Recovery

Evenings offer more time for targeted treatments and intensive care. This is when you can address specific concerns like fine lines, dark spots, or texture issues.

Start with thorough cleansing to remove sunscreen, makeup, and daily pollutants. Follow with any treatment serums or actives, then seal everything in with a nourishing moisturizer. The key is consistency rather than complexity.

Weekly Intensive Treatments

Incorporate weekly treatments that address your skin's deeper needs. This might include a gentle exfoliating mask to improve texture, a hydrating sheet mask for extra moisture, or a clay mask if you're dealing with excess oil production.

These treatments should complement,



not replace, your daily routine. They're opportunities to give your skin extra attention and address concerns that daily products might not fully resolve.

Common September Skin Care Mistakes to Avoid

As routines shift and seasons change, certain skin care mistakes become more common. Being aware of these pitfalls can help you navigate your skincare reset more successfully.

Over-Correcting Summer Issues

It's tempting to dramatically overhaul your routine to address summer's effects, but sudden changes can actually stress your skin further. Instead of introducing multiple new products at once, add one new item every week or two to monitor how your skin responds.

Neglecting Sun Protection

Just because summer is ending doesn't

mean UV protection becomes less important. September sun can still cause damage, especially when people become less vigilant about reapplication and protective clothing.

Maintain consistent SPF use regardless of the season. UV rays remain present year-round, and protecting your skin from further damage is crucial while you're working to repair summer's effects.

Ignoring Skin Barrier Health

Focus on strengthening your skin's natural protective barrier rather than just addressing surface concerns. A healthy barrier function supports all other aspects of skin health and helps your skin better handle environmental stressors.

Look for products that support barrier repair, such as those containing ceramides, fatty acids, or cholesterol. These ingredients work together to maintain your skin's protective function.

Making the Most of Professional Support

September is also an excellent time to schedule professional skin care consultations if you're dealing with persistent issues or want personalized guidance for your routine adjustments.

When to Seek Professional Help

Consider professional consultation if

you're experiencing ongoing skin concerns that don't improve with consistent home care, if you're unsure about product choices, or if you want to address specific issues like acne, rosacea, or significant sun damage.

Our healthcare professionals can provide personalized recommendations based on your skin type, concerns, and lifestyle factors. They can also help you understand which ingredients and treatments will be most effective for your specific needs.

Your Skin Deserves This Investment

National Skin Care Awareness Month serves as a valuable reminder that skincare isn't vanity—it's health maintenance. Your skin is your body's largest organ and deserves the same attention you give to other aspects of your wellness routine.

Taking time this September to reset your skincare approach sets you up for success through the changing seasons ahead. Whether you make small adjustments or implement more significant changes, the key is creating sustainable habits that support your skin's health.

Start small, be consistent, and remember that good skin care is ultimately about feeling comfortable and confident in your own skin. Use this month as an opportunity to recommit to taking care of yourself, one gentle, consistent step at a time.



Fraxel Laser Treatment: The Gold Standard for Skin Rejuvenation

Let's face it—we all want healthy, radiant skin, but life tends to leave its mark. Whether it's sun exposure, aging, acne scars, or just the general wear and tear of time, our skin goes through a lot. That's where Fraxel laser treatment comes in. Often referred to as the gold standard in skin rejuvenation, Fraxel isn't just another trendy treatment—it's a clinically proven technology designed to deliver real, long-term results.

So, if you're on the hunt for a non-invasive way to refresh your complexion and tackle stubborn skin concerns, keep reading. You're about to discover why Fraxel could be the game-changer your skin has been waiting for.

What really sets Fraxel apart is its ability to deliver visible results without the need for surgery or injectables. It has earned its reputation not just through clever marketing, but because of consistent, proven outcomes. From Hollywood celebrities to everyday clients, many have experienced transformative improvements in skin quality and tone thanks to this technology.

What Is Fraxel Laser Treatment?

Fraxel is a fractional laser resurfacing treatment that works by creating controlled micro-injuries in the skin. Unlike traditional laser treatments that target the entire skin surface, Fraxel uses fractional technology to treat only a fraction of the skin at a time—typically 15-20% during each session.

This fractional approach allows the untreated areas of skin to act as a reservoir for healing, which significantly reduces downtime while still delivering

powerful results. The laser energy penetrates deep into the dermis, stimulating your body's natural collagen production process and encouraging cellular turnover.

How Fraxel Works: The Science Behind the Results

The magic of Fraxel lies in its ability to trigger your skin's natural healing response. When the laser creates those microscopic treatment zones, your body immediately gets to work repairing the damaged tissue. This process involves several key mechanisms:

Collagen Remodeling: The controlled injury stimulates fibroblasts to produce new collagen and elastin fibers. This helps improve skin texture, reduce fine lines, and create a firmer, more youthful appearance.

Cellular Renewal: The treatment accelerates the natural exfoliation process, bringing fresh, healthy skin cells to the surface while encouraging the removal of damaged tissue.

Improved Circulation: The healing response increases blood flow to the treated area, delivering essential nutrients and oxygen that support the regeneration process.

Pigment Reduction: The laser energy breaks up excess melanin deposits, helping to fade dark spots, sun damage, and



other forms of hyperpigmentation.

What Skin Concerns Can Fraxel Address?

Fraxel's versatility is one of its greatest strengths. This treatment can effectively address a wide range of skin concerns:

Acne Scarring

Perhaps Fraxel's most celebrated application is treating acne scars. The laser's ability to remodel scar tissue and stimulate collagen production makes it particularly effective for improving the texture and appearance of both rolling and box-car acne scars.

Sun Damage and Age Spots

Years of sun exposure can leave behind stubborn dark spots and uneven pigmentation. Fraxel targets these areas specifically, breaking up the excess melanin and revealing clearer, more even-toned skin underneath.

Fine Lines and Wrinkles

While Fraxel isn't a replacement for surgical procedures, it can significantly improve the appearance of fine lines and mild to moderate wrinkles by boosting collagen production and improving skin elasticity.

Surgical Scars

Whether from accidents, surgery, or

other trauma, many types of scars can be improved with Fraxel's collagen-stimulating effects.

Melasma

This challenging form of hyperpigmentation, often triggered by hormonal changes, responds well to Fraxel treatment when performed by experienced practitioners.

Overall Skin Texture

Even if you don't have specific concerns, Fraxel can improve overall skin quality, creating a smoother, more refined complexion with improved radiance.

The Treatment Process: What to Expect

Understanding what happens during and after a Fraxel treatment can help you feel more confident about the process.

Before Your Treatment

Your healthcare provider will conduct a thorough consultation to assess your skin type, concerns, and treatment goals. They may recommend avoiding certain medications, supplements, or skincare products in the weeks leading up to your appointment.

During the Treatment

The actual procedure typically takes 20-45 minutes, depending on the size of the treatment area. Your healthcare provider

will apply a topical anesthetic to minimize discomfort, then use the Fraxel laser to treat the targeted areas in a systematic pattern.

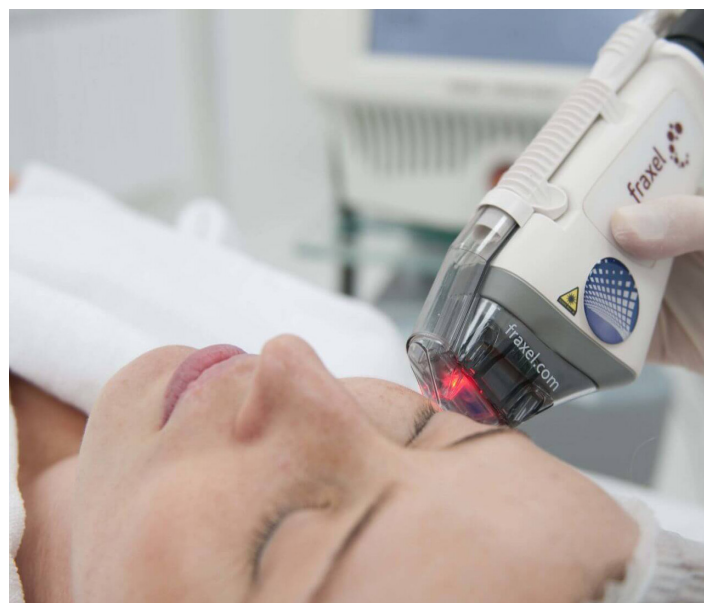
Most patients describe the sensation as similar to a rubber band snapping against the skin, followed by a warm, sunburn-like feeling. The built-in cooling system helps manage discomfort throughout the treatment.

Immediately After Treatment

Your skin will likely appear red and feel warm, similar to a moderate sunburn. This is completely normal and indicates that the treatment is working. Some patients also experience mild swelling, particularly around the eyes.

Recovery and Results Timeline

One of Fraxel's advantages is its relatively manageable recovery process compared to more aggressive laser treatments.



Days 1-3: Initial Healing

During the first few days, your skin will feel tender and may appear quite red. You might notice a bronzed or darkened appearance as your skin begins the healing process. It's crucial to keep your skin moisturized and protected from sun exposure during this time.

Days 4-7: Peeling Phase

Around day 4 or 5, your skin will begin to peel. This is when you'll see the damaged skin sloughing off to reveal the fresh, new skin underneath. Resist the temptation to pick at peeling skin, as this can lead to scarring or infection.

Weeks 2-4: Continued Improvement

As the initial healing completes, you'll begin to notice improvements in skin texture and tone. The full benefits of increased collagen production will continue to develop over the following months.

Long-term Results

Most patients see continued improvement for 3-6 months after treatment as new collagen continues to form. Many people achieve significant improvement with just one treatment, though optimal results often require 2-4 sessions spaced 4-6 weeks apart.

Who Is a Good Candidate for Fraxel?

Fraxel is suitable for most skin types and

tones, but the best candidates typically:

- Have realistic expectations about results
- Are not currently pregnant or breast feeding
- Don't have active skin infections or conditions in the treatment area
- Are committed to following post-treatment care instructions
- Can avoid sun exposure during the healing period

Patients with very dark skin tones may need special considerations to minimize the risk of post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation. A thorough consultation with an experienced healthcare provider is essential to determine if Fraxel is right for you.

Why Fraxel Truly Deserves Its Gold Standard Status

Fraxel has maintained its reputation as the gold standard for laser skin rejuvenation for good reason. The

technology offers a unique combination of effectiveness and safety that few other treatments can match. Its ability to deliver significant results with manageable downtime makes it accessible to people with busy lifestyles who can't afford weeks of recovery.

The treatment's versatility also sets it apart. Rather than needing multiple different procedures for various skin concerns, Fraxel can address multiple issues simultaneously, making it both time and cost-effective for many patients.

Taking the Next Step Toward Radiant Skin

If you're considering Fraxel laser treatment, the most important step is finding a qualified, experienced healthcare provider who can assess your specific needs and create a customized treatment plan. Don't hesitate to ask about their experience with Fraxel, view before-and-after photos of their work, and discuss your expectations openly.

Remember that achieving your best skin is an investment in yourself. While Fraxel represents a significant commitment both financially and in terms of recovery time, the long-lasting results and boost in confidence often make it worthwhile for those ready to address their skin concerns head-on. Your journey to healthier, more radiant skin could be just one consultation away. Schedule an appointment today to learn whether Fraxel is the right choice for your skin goals.





Understanding Skin Pigmentation Disorders

Have you ever noticed a new dark spot on your skin after a breakout clears up, or lighter patches that don't match the rest of your complexion? These changes are often related to skin pigmentation, which is simply the color of your skin. This color is determined by a pigment called melanin, and sometimes our bodies produce too much or too little of it, leading to common skin concerns.

Understanding the cause of these color changes is the first step toward managing them. Skin pigmentation disorders are generally harmless but can be a source of frustration for many. Whether you're dealing with darker patches or lighter spots, knowing what's happening beneath the surface can empower you to find the right solutions.

This guide will explain the two main types of skin pigmentation disorders:

hyperpigmentation (darker skin) and hypopigmentation (lighter skin). We'll explore what causes these conditions, the different forms they can take, and what you can do to achieve a more even-toned complexion.

What Determines Skin Color?

Your unique skin tone is determined by specialized cells called melanocytes. These cells are responsible for producing melanin, the natural pigment that gives color to your skin, hair, and eyes. Everyone has roughly the same number of melanocytes, but the amount of melanin they produce varies. People with darker skin produce more melanin than those with lighter skin.

Melanin also serves a protective function. When your skin is exposed to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays, melanocytes ramp up melanin production to shield your skin from damage. This process is what causes you to tan.

Sometimes, however, this process can

go awry. Factors like sun exposure, hormonal changes, inflammation, or injury can cause melanocytes to produce melanin unevenly. This leads to pigmentation disorders, which appear as patches of skin that are either darker or lighter than your natural tone. These disorders fall into two main categories: hyperpigmentation and hypopigmentation.

What is Hyperpigmentation?

Hyperpigmentation occurs when your body produces an excess of melanin in certain spots, causing patches of skin to become darker than the surrounding areas. These dark spots can range in color from light brown to black and can appear anywhere on the body. It's a very common condition that affects people of all skin tones, though it can be more pronounced in individuals with medium to dark complexions.

Several factors can trigger hyperpigmentation, but the most common culprits are sun exposure, inflammation, and hormonal shifts.

Common Types of Hyperpigmentation

There are several different forms of hyperpigmentation, each with its own distinct cause and appearance.

1. Melasma: Often called the "mask of pregnancy," melasma is characterized by brown or grayish-brown patches that typically appear on the face—especially the cheeks, forehead, bridge of the





nose, and upper lip. It is far more common in women and is strongly linked to hormonal changes. Triggers include:

Pregnancy: Fluctuating hormones can stimulate excess melanin production.

Birth control pills: Oral contraceptives can also trigger melasma.

Hormone therapy: Certain hormone treatments may lead to skin darkening.

Sun exposure is a major contributing factor that can worsen melasma, as UV light stimulates melanin production.

2. Sunspots (Solar Lentigines): As the name suggests, sunspots are caused by prolonged exposure to the sun. Also known as age spots or liver spots, they are flat, oval-shaped areas of increased pigmentation. They typically appear on parts of the body that get the most sun,

such as the face, hands, shoulders, and arms. While they are more common in adults over 50, anyone who spends a lot of time in the sun without protection can develop them.

3. Post-Inflammatory Hyperpigmentation (PIH)

This type of hyperpigmentation is the result of an injury or inflammation of the skin. When the skin heals from trauma, it can leave a dark spot behind. Common causes of PIH include:

Acne: This is one of the most frequent causes, leaving behind dark marks after a pimple has healed.

Eczema or Psoriasis: Inflammatory skin conditions can trigger PIH.

Cuts, burns, or insect bites: Any injury that inflames the skin can result in discoloration.

PIH can affect anyone, but it is often more intense and longer-lasting for individuals with darker skin tones.

What is Hypopigmentation?

In contrast to hyperpigmentation, hypopigmentation is a condition where the skin produces too little melanin, resulting in patches of skin that are lighter than the surrounding area. This loss of pigment can be caused by a variety of factors, including genetic conditions, skin injuries, and certain medical

treatments.

Common Types of Hypopigmentation

Like hyperpigmentation, hypopigmentation comes in several forms.

1. Vitiligo: An autoimmune condition where the body's immune system attacks and destroys melanocytes. This results in smooth, white patches of skin where no pigment is present. It can appear anywhere on the body and can range from a few small spots to widespread patches. The exact cause of vitiligo isn't fully understood, but it's believed to be a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

2. Albinism: A rare genetic disorder characterized by a complete or partial absence of melanin in the skin, hair, and eyes. People with albinism have very pale skin, white or light-colored hair, and often have vision problems. It is an inherited condition, meaning it is passed down through families.

3. Post-Inflammatory Hypopigmentation: Similar to its hyperpigmented counterpart, post-inflammatory hypopigmentation occurs after a skin injury or inflammation. However, instead of overproducing melanin, the skin's ability to produce pigment is disrupted, leading to lighter patches. Conditions that can cause this include:

Blisters, burns, or infections: These can damage melanocytes.

Certain skin treatments: Aggressive chemical peels or laser treatments can sometimes result in a loss of pigment. In many cases, the pigment eventually returns, but it can take several months or even years.

4. Pityriasis Alba: This is a common and mild form of hypopigmentation that primarily affects children and young adults. It appears as poorly defined, scaly, pale patches on the face, neck, and arms. Pityriasis alba is often associated with eczema and tends to be more noticeable in the summer when the surrounding skin tans.

Your Path to an Even Complexion

Dealing with skin pigmentation disorders can be challenging, but many effective treatments are available. The right approach will depend on the type and severity of your condition. If you notice any significant changes in your skin's pigmentation, it's always a good idea to consult a healthcare provider. They can provide an accurate diagnosis and recommend a personalized treatment plan to help you achieve a clearer, more even skin tone.

Protecting your skin from the sun is the single most important step you can take to prevent and manage pigmentation issues. Daily use of a broad-spectrum sunscreen can make a world of difference. If you have any questions, please schedule an appointment with one of our healthcare providers today.