



A PAINLESS APPROACH

New technology removes skin cancer without surgery

BY ALYSSA FISHER

If you look closely at **Jason Green**, there is a slight curve on the tip of his nose where there once was skin cancer. The standard of care at the time for the fair-skinned, blue-eyed dermatologist was Mohs surgery, a technique that cuts the skin layer by layer to remove cancerous tissue.

Today, there's nonsurgical superficial radiotherapy, an FDA-approved technology that treats nonmelanoma skin cancer without cutting, scarring or downtime. Green was quick to invest in it for the August opening of his clinic, Green Dermatology and Cosmetic Center in Deerfield Beach.

"I thought I could provide patients with an option that I wish was provided to me,"

Green says. "It was a no-brainer."

The machine cures basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas—the two most common skin cancers—in approximately 14, 30-second treatments. "It takes me longer to set up than have the procedure done," he quips.

The superficial radiation stays at skin level and treats only the cancer spot. One of his patients was his grandfather, who previously had surgery to treat the skin cancer on his scalp. With the SRT, he's now cancer-free.

SRT, which is covered by insurance, isn't available in many dermatology offices. However, Green is sure that will change within the next few years. "I can't understand why you wouldn't have it,"

CHECK THE LABEL

Living in South Florida, we know sunscreen is key. We're almost immune to its scent. But do you know if you've applied the right one?

"The reality is, consumers do not have any idea of the right products to use," Green says. "The more you're in the sun, the more risk you have. If you're using the wrong products, in the long term, you're actually going to hurt yourself."

Most over-the-counter sunblocks protect against UVB rays, which usually burn the superficial layers of skin. Few cover UVA rays, which penetrate more deeply and cause 70 percent of skin cancers, he says.

What to look for: Zinc oxide or titanium dioxide as active ingredients.

Misconception: "Don't get so caught up in the SPF number because there is a minimal improvement of the protection factor when you get beyond 30," he says. "When you have zinc oxide in there, it's always going to be level 30. People need to start thinking of active ingredients as the primary thing to look for in their sunscreen."

he says. Every day, he sees patients with skin cancer, and, according to the Florida Society of Dermatology and Dermatologic Surgery, half of all Americans will have skin cancer at least once before the age of 65. While technology can cure some cancers, Green is vigilant about spreading the importance of precaution.

"I love what I do. I really am passionate about it," he says. "I'm born and raised here—I used to go in the sun and do everything you can think of, and now I just do it differently. I actually wear sunblock, and I'm proud that I'm pale."

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