

New Fraxel Laser Treats All Skin Types

Christopher A. Moeller, M.D., is committed to improving patients' lives without interfering in them. That's why Moeller Dermatology just added the new Fraxel laser to their skin care arsenal – the first one in Wichita and the surrounding region. The laser takes advantage of optical tracking technology for a safer, more comfortable treatment. For the patient, that translates to far less recovery time and no unsightly blue dye.

The most significant advancement is the success of this new laser on all types of skin tones. Previous generations of lasers have a high risk of scarring when used on any but the fairest complexions. Launched in fall 2006, the new Fraxel laser works on everyone. It's safe to use on any part of the body, even sensitive skin around the neck and hands. And it's not just for wrinkles and age spots. Fraxel also removes acne scars, including difficult "icepick" spots and skin discoloration. It is the only laser that is FDA-approved to treat melasma, those darkened patches of skin that are common during pregnancy. The Fraxel technology, featured in national magazines *Allure* and *O, The Oprah Magazine*, as well as trade publications like *Dermatology Times*, has even had success targeting treatment-resistant melasma.

At Moeller Dermatology, it all comes back to helping the patient. Dr. Moeller has performed laser treatments for 23 years. A board-certified dermatologist, he founded The Skin Enhancement Center in 2000 that offers cosmetic treatments and skin care services. He still serves as the center's director.

"We're seeing increasing demand for cosmetic procedures," he says. "People are leading active lives and taking care of themselves, so there's more interest in skin treatments."

The Fraxel laser fills these demands by creating narrow but deep columns of dead tissue across the selected region. A 30-minute session results in around 500,000 such columns, each surrounded by healthy tissue that stimulates new collagen growth. Each treatment targets between 20 and 25 percent of the skin's surface, and the treatment is designed to be most effective after three to five sessions, spaced two to four weeks apart. The laser arm's rolling tip moves over the skin in one long, continuous motion. A red light on the tip of the Fraxel



WICHITA MAGAZINE TOP DOCTOR | DERMATOLOGY

machine acts as an optical mouse. If the LED senses that the apparatus is not moving, the laser won't fire. In other words, if the laser arm should pause for any reason, the skin underneath won't suffer from overexposure.

The same patients who want healthy, attractive skin that matches their active lives and attitudes don't want to be slowed down by long recovery times. They aren't willing to take two to four weeks out of their schedules while their skin heals. With Fraxel treatments, they don't have to wait any longer.

"The patient doesn't have to be knocked out, and there's not a lot of downtime," says Dr. Moeller. "People we treat will be back at work the next morning."

In the past, patient options have been limited. Previous generations of lasers produced results because they simply burned off the skin. Several years ago, safer lasers were introduced but weren't as effective because they worked mostly on the skin's surface, similar to topical creams. Fraxel improves on each of these by working underneath the surface without burning.

The secret to its success is the penetration

depth of the laser. The deeper the laser travels, the more effective it is. Thus, stretch marks and acne scars require taller, wider columns. To preserve the remaining healthy tissue, larger holes are spaced farther apart. Superficial blemishes, such as fine lines and wrinkles, use smaller and more tightly clustered sites.

Yet another benefit of the new Fraxel technology is decreased discomfort. Because Fraxel preserves healthy tissue and surface skin, the heat and pain typically associated with laser treatment is less intense. Thanks to an anesthetic gel applied to the skin prior to treatment, the patient feels little discomfort. For added comfort, patients are given a hose that expends cool air to hold throughout the procedure. This counteracts the heat of the laser as it moves across the skin. The aftereffects of a session, tiny raised bumps and redness on the targeted area, fade by the following morning.

Helping patients look and feel better is a hallmark of Moeller Dermatology. The addition of the innovative Fraxel laser treatment is just one more way Dr. Moeller's practice is doing exactly that. —Karen Ostergren