

restoring healthy skin

Sydney cosmetic and laser surgeon **Dr Samuel Seit** explains a non-ablative treatment to reduce the appearance of stretch marks and acne scars.

Christine Doggett reports.

Men and women alike are often dismayed to discover the appearance of stretch marks, or striae, after an episode of rapid weight gain. Striae are a form of scarring of the skin and have a silvery white hue. They are caused by a tearing of the dermis when the skin is stretched after rapid weight gain, such as a bulking up of the muscles, obesity and in pregnancy when they may appear on the abdomen and breasts. In fact, 75 percent of women report the appearance of stretch marks due to child-bearing.

'Women are often advised to use certain topical applications such as Vitamin E cream to prevent or treat stretch marks and, while it may sometimes appear to be helpful, there are no published clinical trials reporting proof of efficacy,' says Sydney cosmetic and laser surgeon Dr Samuel Seit.

'Repeated microdermabrasion to gently exfoliate the skin and stimulate new collagen production may show some improvement, but the newest modality in the treatment of stretch marks is non-ablative fractional laser resurfacing using the Fraxel re:store laser.'

The Fraxel re:store laser uses microscopic scattered pulses of light that coagulate the damaged tissue. The body responds to the treatment by producing new collagen and epithelium or surface layers of skin. In 2007 Brazilian clinical trials reported a 75 percent improvement in both the texture and appearance of mature stretch marks in all skin types after five treatments with the Fraxel re:store laser.

Dr Seit also uses the Fraxel re:store laser as a very important adjunct to skin surgery and post-surgical scar management. 'Many of my skin cancer patients, for example, require reconstructive surgery, often to the face,' he says. 'The Fraxel re:store erases the scars as much as possible. Patients can commence treatment two weeks after surgery

and there is an improvement of up to 80 percent after two to five treatments.'

The Fraxel re:store laser works by breaking down scar tissue formed by surgical wound closure with tiny points of light, stimulating the production of new collagen and eventually replacing scar tissue with healthier skin.

Acne scars can also be treated with Fraxel re:store. In the past, acne scars were treated with an ablative laser, risking hypopigmentation, infection and further scarring. Ablative treatments also require a long down time. 'The use of Fraxel re:store in the treatment of acne scarring has virtually eliminated side effects and has become the new gold standard for the management of acne scarring,' says Dr Seit. **acsm**



BEFORE



AFTER treatment with Fraxel re:store by Dr Seit



BEFORE



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