

7 Reasons to see a Dermatologist

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Why would you ever think that you need to see a dermatologist? There are plenty of those who will tell you that they know how your skin works, what is wrong with it and how to fix it when problems arise. The fact is that nobody knows the skin like a dermatologist does.

I know it is tempting to settle for an advice from an "expert" friend or a cosmetic's counter representative but here are the reasons why you should not settle for anything but the best.

The following list outlines 7 key reasons why you should see a dermatologist for your skin care needs:

Dermatologists are skin experts – let's put it plainly – Dermatologists are the most knowledgeable about both normal and abnormal function of the skin, nails and hair. There is no other medical or surgical specialty that dedicates as much time and effort to the study of the skin. Others may have taken courses and seminars but let's not be fooled; dermatologists dedicate their careers to the study of the skin. In addition, this study continues each and every year they are practicing.

Safe time – others may take several visits and tries to finally diagnose what you need or how to treat your skin, while dermatologists are frequently able to precisely diagnose your concerns right at the first visit. Each visit is time that you need to take out of your schedule. The correct approach to the management of your skin has to do with the proper initial analysis and diagnosis. Diagnosis does not relate to abnormal skin but rather to any skin condition: normal or abnormal. Frequently, one visit is all that is needed to start you on the right path. Without proper and accurate assessment, you will be treating something that you do not have. For example, there are different forms of acne and all have to be treated differently.

Safe money – this is truer now than ever. Were you ever recommended treatments for your skin condition that did not work? Sometimes, patients have purchased doz-

ens of creams and lotions that others recommended but that did not resolve the skin condition. These patients frequently say that they used "everything" to treat their condition without success. The fact, in many cases, is that their skin condition was not diagnosed properly and, consequently, the treatments did not address the problem. We all know that having to buy multiple creams gets to be expensive and frustrating. Once again, it is time to see a dermatologist and have a fresh start with proper assessment that is the foundation of any successful therapy.

Have effective medical treatments – many skin conditions look alike. Eczema, psoriasis, nummular dermatitis and fungal infection can all look very similar. Those who are not familiar with subtleties of these diagnoses frequently confuse them. When that happens, you will be treated with ineffective medications. These treatments can have side effects and you can be using them without much success. You will not only waste your time and money but also have to suffer unnecessarily. Only when the diagnosis is accurate, will you be given treatments designed to do the job right.

Have effective cosmetic treatments – have you noticed more and more "cosmetic" experts these days? Well, let's face it, cosmetics have to do with our outward appearance where skin, hair and nails play a prominent role.

You know what comes next – dermatologists know the skin, nails and hair and they

can recommend treatments that can make you look your best. In addition, it is worthwhile to note that most of the medical grade cosmetic treatments such as lasers, chemical peels and liposuction have been developed and popularized by dermatologists. When in doubt, ask your dermatologist for suggestions about the ways to look your best.

Have effective preventative examinations – dermatologists not only treat diseased skin but also recommend maintenance treatments for your skin including appropriate sun protection, chemical peels, IPL rejuvenation and retinoid cream treatments. Preventative visits are critical in spotting early signs of trouble and can save time, money and even lives. Have a visit with a dermatologist once in a while. If everything is well, you may not see one for a while but when concerns are spotted, you may be asked to return in a shorter time.

See the one who is often imitated but never duplicated – dermatology is a specialty designated by national accreditation agency. In Canada, dermatologists are accredited by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. Be sure that you ask the doctor or a receptionist for the confirmation of correct accreditation. It is your health and you want to be sure of it.

You have one body and one skin – look after it as best as you can with the advice of those who know it the best – your neighbourhood dermatologist.