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### What is Holistic Dermatology?

BY ALAN M. DATTNER, MD

Holistic dermatology focuses on treating the underlying causes of an individual’s skin problem using the least invasive means first. It focuses on environmental and nutritional factors, gut microbiome and function, and history of exposures to chemicals, organisms and stresses as potential sources of inflammation or modification of the body’s ability to deal with potential antigens setting off inflammatory processes.

Understanding of the scientific mechanisms involved helps find both causal factors and natural remedies. Modern drugs enable the dermatologist to prevent morbidity and even mortality in acute and severe skin conditions. However, the potential risk of collateral damage from inhibiting mechanistic pathways makes this form of treatment fall toward the end of the option

list, in a holistic approach. Understanding the factors causing the patient’s exposure and how that could be altered is primary. Generally, a dermatologic diagnosis and an etiologic diagnosis are made. Focus is placed on changing the etiologic factors that lead to the skin disease. Often that requires improving the function of other organ systems in the body, especially the digestive system.

Detective work starts with exploring the events occurring before the onset or re-exacerbation of a patient’s rash, as well as the response to treatment using medications, supplements or dietary manipulations. The more one understands about the healing systems tried, the better one can interpret the causal pathophysiologic implications. Diet changes and nutritional

supplementation are key tools used in Holistic Dermatology. They are used according to several perspectives, including good medicine, functional medicine, and modern integrative medicine, and other healing systems familiar to the practitioner such as Ayurveda and Chinese medicine. Each system has its own form of “energetics”, which might dictate choices more congruent with the nature of the individual involved than just addressing the problem itself. Some of these are principles that have roots in many different systems of healing, including American herbal medicine and dermatology. For example, a patient who is “plethoric”, who easily gets fired up and brings blood to the face, and has rosacea, would not be given a hot cayenne pepper drink to loosen up their mucus to help their cold, because it would aggravate their underlying problem.

Nutritional changes are made to remove antigenic foods, to improve insulin balance, to improve the microbiome, and to reinstruct the gut immune system. Supplements are given to improve digestion, support removal of toxic substances, aid hormonal function, and counteract genetic defects of metabolism, to name a few.

To have a better perspective on the underlying causal factors, at least one other system is required. Imagine Plato’s cave, where we peer in and only see the shadows on the wall. Having at least one other window to give perspective on the characters forming those shadows, gives us more of a three dimensional picture of the nature of the characters forming the shadows. So too, going beyond conventional medical data and integrating in systems of your choice can give a deeper perspective on causal factors. This allows new treatment perspectives to alleviate the problem.

Many practitioners and lay people attempt remedies from diet and other systems to treat skin diseases. Their perspective is that the skin is easy to see and treat, and the conditions are relatively benign. They unfortunately do not have the deeper understanding of the skin that comes with dermatology training and practice, so they often fail because they lack this essential pillar of knowledge for treating difficult skin conditions. At the very least, they are unable to hold in mind a proper differential diagnosis, which is essential to consider as new data emerges, reflecting on the underlying pathology. This is why holistic dermatology should include a strong background in dermatology.

I call my work “holistic” because it involves more than the physiology and immunology of the skin. It involves the entire nature of the individual. If a patient is stuffing an emotional conflict with food or scratching, it takes more than pointing out the change needed to change their disease-aggravating pattern. The more effective your ability or that of your network, the better you will be able to help these individuals. This may require psychologic, emotional, or even spiritual perspective to shift the patient’s patterns.

Finally, there is a societal perspective. We have slid into exposure to many pesticides, preservatives, flavoring agents, natural extracts, petrochemical products, heavy metals, and an astounding 151 lbs of sugar average consumption per person per year in this country. This is only a fraction of the potential aggravators considered normal in our population. It is often a formidable task just to normalize consumption in face of the overwhelming pressure to consume and the prevalence of aggravating factors. As we speak as a group about the dangers of tanning beds and excessive sun exposure, so too should we consider speaking of these other culture-wide dangers.

## Board Prep Resources Checklist

BY LINDSAY STROWD, MD

There are a plethora of resources devoted to the dermatology boards. The AAD meetings provide MOC courses to help dermatologists prepare for re-certification. These courses are comprised of 25-50 board quality questions and answers, and can help residents understand the type of questions asked on the boards. There are also AAD sessions which focus on high-yield board topics such as infectious diseases or genodermatoses. Many residents choose to attend private board prep courses such as Barron's board review, Chicago board review, and Merz board review among others. These courses can be helpful for residents who struggle with self-guided study, but they can be expensive.

Online study resources are constantly expanding. Some "tried and true" online resources include the Derm In-Review question bank and the AAD website. The AAD website has archives of past MOC exams as well as old JAAD CME articles. Residents can also purchase an official Kodachrome set of images. Residents should become familiar with viewing dermatopathology slides since a part of the pathology board section is digital.

Journals provide good sources of board-relevant material, and residents should read several each month to stay up to date on current trends in dermatology treatment.

Textbooks are traditional resources that provide the foundation of a resident's dermatology knowledge. Some quality texts include Bologna Dermatology, Andrews Diseases of the Skin, and the du Vivier Atlas of Clinical Dermatology. These

texts serve as a resource for quality images. Approximately half of the board questions contain an image, and the importance of image review cannot be understated. The Derm In-Review binder is another excellent resource. Ideally, one textbook and the Derm In-Review binder should be reviewed during the six months prior to the boards.

Residents should create a study schedule that allows review of all pertinent topics within the six months prior to the test date. A reasonable goal is two hours a day during the week, and 8-10 hours during the weekend. You should also schedule study-free days, which will help avoid burnout. Do not schedule any new topics to review in the final week before the exam, as you will want this time to review areas of special weakness.

Six months prior to the boards, you should have good knowledge of your personal dermatology strengths and weaknesses. It is tempting to shy away from studying materials with which you are less comfortable, but these should get the most attention.

In-service exams and other self-assessments help identify areas of weakness. You have taken many standardized tests and should know how you learn best. Do not deviate from the learning strategies you have utilized up to this point. The boards are like any other standardized test with a set number of concepts to learn and it is a matter of mastering these.

## Addressing the Age Old Concern of Aging

BY DR. AUTUMN STARNES

In the initial mental construct of the practice I was most concerned that I would not have enough patients to remain open. The focus in the initial steps of the practice were staff, and location. We had to review EMR and Practice Management systems, computers, tablets, network and internet access. The other systems in the practice were phones, and the logistics of staff responsibilities and patient flow. There is also the business aspect of the practice including insurance for the business and malpractice, setting up a corporation, and local business licenses. The list of items that are core and required before a single patient can be seen is quite overwhelming.

### Addressing patient concerns

This is further complicated by our natural and appropriate concern as physicians to do the absolute best job at finding and treating skin cancer, medical dermatologic conditions and so many other life-altering diseases we see as dermatologists. I felt that only after all of these items were appropriately addressed could I discuss the topics that many patients have at the top of their list...aging. Often patients presented for their medical or surgical skin concerns but once addressed, wanted to discuss what they could do for their aging appearance, specifically what they can use on their skin.

I was not equipped to fully address these concerns. I had spent my years in Dermatology training learning medical and surgical dermatology. I had great

interest in the topics that patients wanted to discuss but I was not fully informed. I knew the basics but when it came down to a patient presenting a bottle from the department store asking if this was good for their skin and worth the money, I was not able to confidently and concisely answer their questions. When they would bring in ten bottles, I did not have enough time to read the ingredients and see if every bottle brought to me included significant and scientifically sound ingredients for their specific concerns. I did not feel I had enough time or knowledge to address their skin care concerns.

### Finding a Solution

I was at a dermatological conference when I saw this new service Dr. Baumann had designed. Dr. Baumann's Skin Type Solution organizes which product is best for each individual persons skin type. Understanding this limitation of myself and limitation of my time made it an easy decision to add this to my practice.

In my clinic patients are given an ipad at check-in and asked to complete the Skin IQ Questionnaire while they wait to be called back by the nursing staff. This Skin IQ Questionnaire takes 3-5 minutes and does an exceptional job of determining if someone tends toward dry or oily skin, if they are sensitive to irritants, if they have a propensity toward wrinkling and if they have concerning pigment on their face. These four main foci are all binary options.

This makes 16 distinct skin types. Example, Oily, Sensitive, Pigmented and Wrinkle prone. Knowing the skin type allows me to discuss the main concerns and recommend the correct product in an efficient and effective manner.

In my office there are 16 distinct shelves. These shelves display the products with great confidence that are effective. The items on the shelves are selected with Dr. Baumann's extensive knowledge base of the products on the market and the best price-conscious determination of what is effective.

My patients are searching for solutions and I was searching for a way to answer their

questions. This complete solution allows me to interact and address concerns that patients have and actually give them a solution.

Patients are searching for a way to improve the way they look and age. We are the experts on aging, the skin, and products that are available today, to have a positive effect on patient lives. Dr. Baumann's Skin Type Solutions bridged the gap I could not address.

I am thankful that STS and Dr. Baumann has helped me complete a package of service I had aspired to deliver long ago.

## Society Spotlight: International Society of Regenerative Medicine (ISRegen)

BY DR. KAVITA BERI

### What is ISRegen?

The International Society of Regenerative Medicine (ISRegen) is a member-based medical society with a focus on integrating clinical practice and scientific innovation in the field Regenerative Medicine. Our goal is to help integrate this modern and new age science of regenerative medicine into the current practice of aesthetics & anti-aging. As well as establish a quality standard in order to optimize patient outcomes when delivering this cutting edge medicine to patients throughout the world.

ISRegen was formed to collaborate, communicate and train physicians in this new and dynamically advancing medical field by educating on the latest cutting edge clinical procedures, new evidence-based scientific research and technology. Our faculty is well known and published in the field of regenerative aesthetics & anti-aging, stem cell therapy, prp as well as holistic anti-aging.

ISRegen offers the opportunity to board certify with the International Board of Regenerative Medicine (IBRM). CME workshops on regenerative medicine are

also offered throughout the United States. Members receive a 40% discount on all workshops as well as the ability to attend any webinar at no cost. All CME's acquired through ISRegen workshops are approved by the IBRM and will count towards the minimum requirements for completing the certification process.

### **What events do you have coming up?**

*Visit [ISRegen.org](http://ISRegen.org) for 2018 dates*

### **What do you contribute to dermatology?**

We discuss the concept of regenerative dermatology and regenerative anti-aging with stem cell science.

We educate on the multidimensional aging of the body physiology and how that will impact skin aging.

We offer a hands-on approach to the latest in regenerative stem cell therapy based technology and procedures.

We provide an understanding of an integrative holistic approach for the patient and how it can be incorporated into clinical practice.

### **Who are your members?**

Physicians from various field including: Orthopedics, Plastic Surgery, Dermatology, Internal Medicine, and Family Practice.

### **How do your members benefit?**

Discounts for Annual Meetings/Workshops

Subscription to the ISRegen Journal (in development)

Members Only Access on ISRegen Website (access to; full-text articles and speakers'

presentations; video tutorials; 24/7 access to previously recorded webinars; patient education resources)

Influence the future of ISRegen and the shape of the field of regenerative medicine through participation on various ISRegen Committees

### **Are you completing any research?**

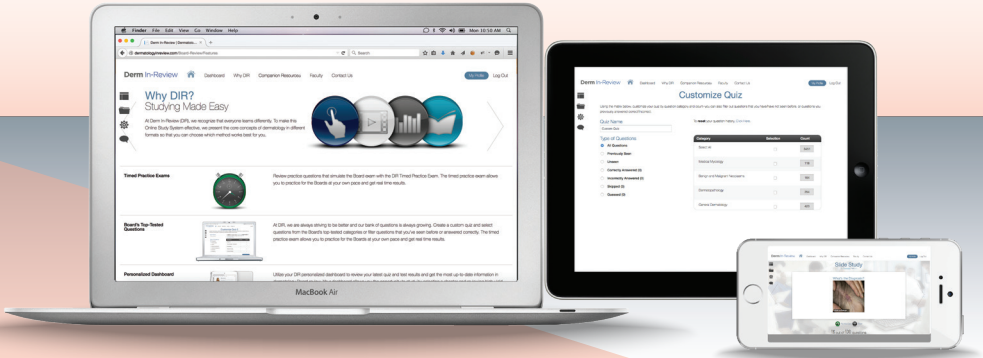
The society in the future will offer opportunity to present poster abstracts related to the field of Regenerative Medicine as well as offer scholarship and research grants in the field. Currently the faculty on board is involved in the active clinical research and industry based research in the field.

### **What is something unique about your society?**

ISRegen is solely focused on regenerative medicine therapies, techniques, research and technology. While other societies dabble or touch on this area, we are specialized and it's all we do. What is unique about the society is first of its kind to integrate the regenerative medicine field under one umbrella, offering physicians from various backgrounds an opportunity to advance their knowledge in this dynamic field. Also, we are introducing the concept of a multidimensional approach to understanding the aging- physiology as well as techniques with a multimodal application in healing the body.



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