

BOOK REVIEWS

Textbook of Facial Rejuvenation. The Art of Minimally Invasive Combination Therapy, ed. by Nicholas J. Lowe. 2002. ISBN 1-84184-095-5. Price £129.95. Martin Dunitz, UK. Hardcover. 400 pages.

increasingly obsessed with preserving youth at almost any cost.

This book begins with a chapter on photoprotection, highlighting the importance of prophylaxis in reducing future problems with skin ageing. Subsequently the authors describe topical agents used to reverse the signs of skin ageing. Retinoids, as well as antioxidants and peeling agents, are covered from both a clinical and a mechanistic viewpoint. Although there is some repetition between chapters (each written by a different author), they give a very good overview of current topical treatments for ageing skin, including the use of non-medical agents.

Other chapters deal with laser technology for removing wrinkles and brown spots; both ablative and non-ablative laser techniques are described. The use of botulinum toxin and temporary dermal fillers against deep wrinkles is also described. The last part of the book is devoted mainly to various invasive procedures including permanent implant devices, hair transplantation and hair removal.

In two very useful chapters, the photodocumentation of pre- and post-therapy findings is highlighted, including the use of digital cameras. Several examples are given of how deceptive photography can be if not properly standardized. Another important issue, especially in the USA, is the legal aspects of medical treatment for skin ageing. More than 80 pages are devoted to this matter in an appendix, which gives several good examples of how patient information and consent forms can be designed. Practical advice on how to approach a patient seeking cosmetic dermatology and how to run a specialized clinic is also given.

By and large this book is reader friendly and well illustrated with many good-quality colour pictures. It is probably essential for anyone who practices cosmetic dermatology. For someone who does not, it is still fascinating to read about all treatments (many of which seem to produce only minor results, but at a high cost!) and to think about how affluent societies are becoming