

Dima Ali, M.D.

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DEFINING Anti-Aging

By J. Elaine Spoor

What does anti-aging mean anyway? Can you really turn back the hands of time through esthetic or even medical intervention? The answer is "yes" or "no" depending on whom you ask. Due to crushing consumer demand that has fueled extraordinary technological growth, many spas and medical facilities are now touting "anti-aging" benefits. But are they really reversing the aging process, or simply mitigating damage that has accumulated over a lifetime? Whatever the answer, people are looking much younger these days, thanks in part to a specialized group of medical and spa professionals who are willing to wage a good fight.



"Anti-aging is definitely a buzz term, and just like anything that piques the interest of consumers, companies are taking this term and marketing it in different ways. In truth, anti-aging is meant to treat the consequences of aging. Whether patients are being treated at an esthetic or medical level, the goal should always be to help them lead the healthiest life possible. This includes addressing the health of their skin to make it behave in a better way and helping them live a vigorous life well into advanced age."

"Some physicians focus on the esthetic aspects of aging or rejuvenation, and some focus on the medical or preventive aspects. Whatever the focus, anti-aging medicine is based on sound and responsible medical care. It also happens to be the fastest-growing medical specialty in the United States!"

"Every physician takes a slightly different approach to anti-aging therapies. Anti-aging practitioners can focus on prevention of disease by screening for diabetes, heart disease and cholesterol levels, and getting that colonoscopy and mammogram on a timely basis. Anti-aging therapies can also involve screening for hormone deficiencies, prescribing hormone replacement therapy, and often include nonablative laser procedures. Equally important, they teach patients how to take care of themselves, and not just rely on medications to do the job."

-- Dima Ali, M.D.