



# Men's Skin Care

## A LINE-UP OF TREATMENTS AND PROTOCOLS FOR THE MALE PATIENT

By James E. Mason, M.A., Contributing Editor

As often happens, it is time to discuss men's skin care again. It goes without saying that men's skin care is vastly different from typical skin care in many ways, most of which we already know; but it bears repeating.

In preparing for this article, your correspondent could not help but notice that he was casting about in all directions, looking for information, an idea, a purpose, a "take." Finally the realization came that, although we see more and more articles on men's skin care, we usually get perspective and point of view on the basis of data gathered in surveys, or collected by data accumulators. Rarely if ever had the author seen an article on men's skin care that reflected the experience and opinions of "regular" guys in "regular" settings.

Over the course of several weeks, and in a variety of settings, the author set about to ask a group of men about spas, skin care, aesthetics, and themselves in general. Here are the most significant results. No claim is made that these

results are more, or even AS accurate as those reflected elsewhere. This was not a scientific study, and the results were not subjected to multivariate mathematical and/or statistical analysis. We just, you know, talked. And this is what almost two dozen guys had to say (along with analysis from the sidelines – my perspective).

*You need to make sure you understand the differences between men's and women's skin and design protocols to cover these differences.*

Men's skin is still different from women's skin. We talk about this all the time, but we continue circling back to discuss the basics time and again. It is not only factually true, but it is believed to be true by men. You need to make sure you understand the differences between men's and

women's skin and design protocols to cover these differences.

## MEN'S SKIN CARE PACKAGING

It is not just differences in physiology that you need to concern yourself with, but also in packaging (qua packaging), design (qua design), and product attributes. For example, it is a myth that men will not follow a complex regime, or use more than two products, or whatever. Men do not mind complex, but they are NOT fond of just complicated. Guys get complex, especially if they have ever rebuilt a carb, or even replaced brakes. For men you know who have not done these things, fear not; it is still not a total loss. Remember, complex is fine, complicated is not. The difference is between the raw number of steps and what is accomplished in each step.

*Men prefer more aggressive treatments, with higher payoffs, even if there is more downtime, or immediate downside risk.*

Accordingly, whether you are a product developer, or a Dermatologist, Plastic Surgeon, or Aesthetician, you need to understand that Men's skin care does not need to be "dumbed down," but it is crucial to make sure that your protocol not be perceived as "dumb." Guys interpret "dumb" as more steps than are necessary, not just a lot of steps. Your correspondent has prescribed regimes which had as

many as seven or eight steps A.M. and up to eight or nine P.M., which were followed precisely and with great success. So it is not an unwillingness to follow a regime with several steps; it is whether or not the regime makes sense.

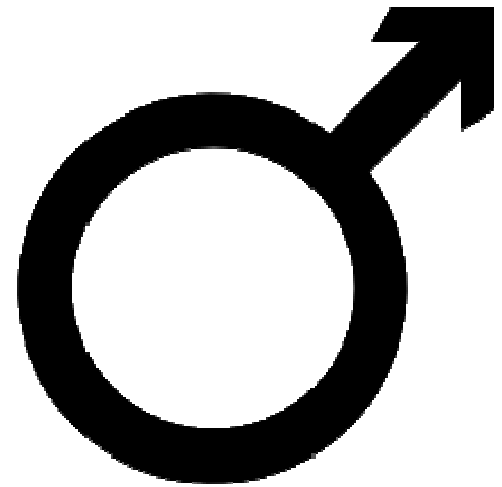
In addition, you should keep in mind that men need to integrate their new protocol (if it is a new protocol) into their existing routine. Women do not usually have a problem in abandoning a previously existing routine in favor of a new one. This is particularly difficult for many men who prefer routinization much more than women do.

Men prefer active, functional products. There is a common need with men to see a significant change with respect to the benefits received from a cosmetic product or treatment. Accordingly, products and ingredients with noticeable effects are much more likely to draw

men in, or capture their attention. The takeaway here is that immediacy and significance should always be highlighted in the case of products which can offer these benefits.

Men prefer more aggressive treatments, with higher payoffs, even if there is more downtime, or immediate downside risk. Of the men who said they were or might be willing to submit to a more invasive

procedure (defined as not available from an esthetician and ONLY available from a dermatologist or plastic surgeon), the overwhelming differentiator was whether or not the patient would see significant changes in their hair, skin, body, or eyes (or all four). If yes, more men said they would undergo a more invasive procedure, even when there was greater risk or potential downtime.



Men are far more likely to feel products are not working if they do not "feel" an immediate effect, even if the effect is transient. This, of course, is nothing new. Manufacturers have been adding camphor and eucalyptus and menthol and so on to men's products for years. Turns out they were right to do so, and they still are today. Men like to FEEL something, even if the effect is transitory and of no functional benefit whatsoever. In fact, most men believe there is a disconnect between how the product feels and how much benefit it conveys, but they absolutely do not believe a product is effective unless they "feel something."

## THE MALE FACTOR

Men really do not like to be thought of as an “add-on” or “Johnny Come Lately” piece of the business. One strong objection was to a spa environment that clearly caters to women making a “niche” or “token” commitment to men’s services. The overwhelming majority of men say they would not go to a spa anyway; but if they did, they would definitely want one that caters to men and men’s needs. Having defined the above, however, it is not necessarily more likely that men would visit a spa or salon specifically “pitched” to their “needs.”

The least appealing approach for most men (despite the fact that it is the most common model used) is the “Club Room” type of atmosphere. This was mostly due to the majority of men indicating that they had never been in, or were a member of, a private club, and therefore could not identify with the model. The most popular model among men who expressed a preference and a willingness to attend, was that of a “neighborhood gym.”

Men may be easier to transition to more invasive procedures if they are more likely to confer an immediate benefit. Of course, there was wide variance on what was considered an “Invasive Procedure.” Those procedures with high significance (i.e. importance) and high relevance (“importance to me”) were Blepharotomy, Hair Restoration, Mini-Lifts, Non-Blepharo Eye Procedures (i.e. LASER, IPL, radioenergy, etc.), Neck Treatments (all types), and

Facial Skin Resurfacing (all types). More involved procedures (i.e. full face lifts) were farther down on the list, but still mentioned. The most important factor was the rate of change over time. In other words, the more “bang for the buck” in terms of significance and immediacy, the more willing men would be to undergo a more invasive procedure.

The most “popular” non-invasive procedures among men were Microdermabrasion, Executive Facial (Full-Service Men’s Facial), Back Facial (Full Service, including Cleansing, Exfoliation, Steaming, Extractions, and Moisturizing), Anti-Acne Treatment (defined as a broad-spectrum Therapeutic Facial, including Extractions and condition-specific treatment options), and generally some kind of Hand/Nail/Arm treatment. Waxing was mentioned by a large percentage of the men surveyed, but a level of separation between treatment mode types was sought.

Men have a relatively low opinion of spas, medical aesthetics, and men’s services in general. Interestingly, most of the men interviewed said they have no problem with the “idea” of somebody getting men’s services, they just did not see themselves as the recipient. Even when the author asked if they would pursue a spa or salon visit if it was in the form of a gift, most men said they would resist the idea.

Men are sharply divided with respect to surgical or dermatological versus strictly aesthetic procedures and services. What is meant here is that there seems to be less of a “spectrum” of opinions with respect to transitioning from aesthetic to dermatological or surgical options. It is not an even split, but it IS mostly a polar split between men who are willing to “up the ante.” Men who are likely to transition are FAR more likely to transition, and men who are NOT likely to transition are FAR LESS likely to transition.



Of course, no overview of the state of Men's Services would be complete without a roundup of trends for this year and the coming seasons. Herewith, a non-exclusive, non-exhaustive, alphabetical list of trends for men's aesthetic products and services in the near term, along with current definitions and "proper" lingo:

### ANAL BLEACHING

Sadly, this is just what you think it is. This procedure had wide appeal among all the various "types" of men interviewed, i.e. professional vs. non-professional, older vs. younger; straight versus not. A very popular option among a fairly significant number of men surveyed. Your humble servant has no idea

how to perform this procedure, and so will not comment.

### B+B (BRAZILIAN AND BOOTY)

The Bootyzilian, a.k.a., The Whole Enchilada: This essentially involves removing all of the hair between the beltline and the top of the leg. As with the Brazilian, the operator must determine how involved this procedure is anticipated to be.

### MEN'S BRAZILIAN

Just like a "traditional" Brazilian, this is the removal of all or nearly all the hair in the pubic area. There are various types and levels of Brazilian, so the operator must be sure to determine


precisely what the patron wants removed, and what he wants left behind.

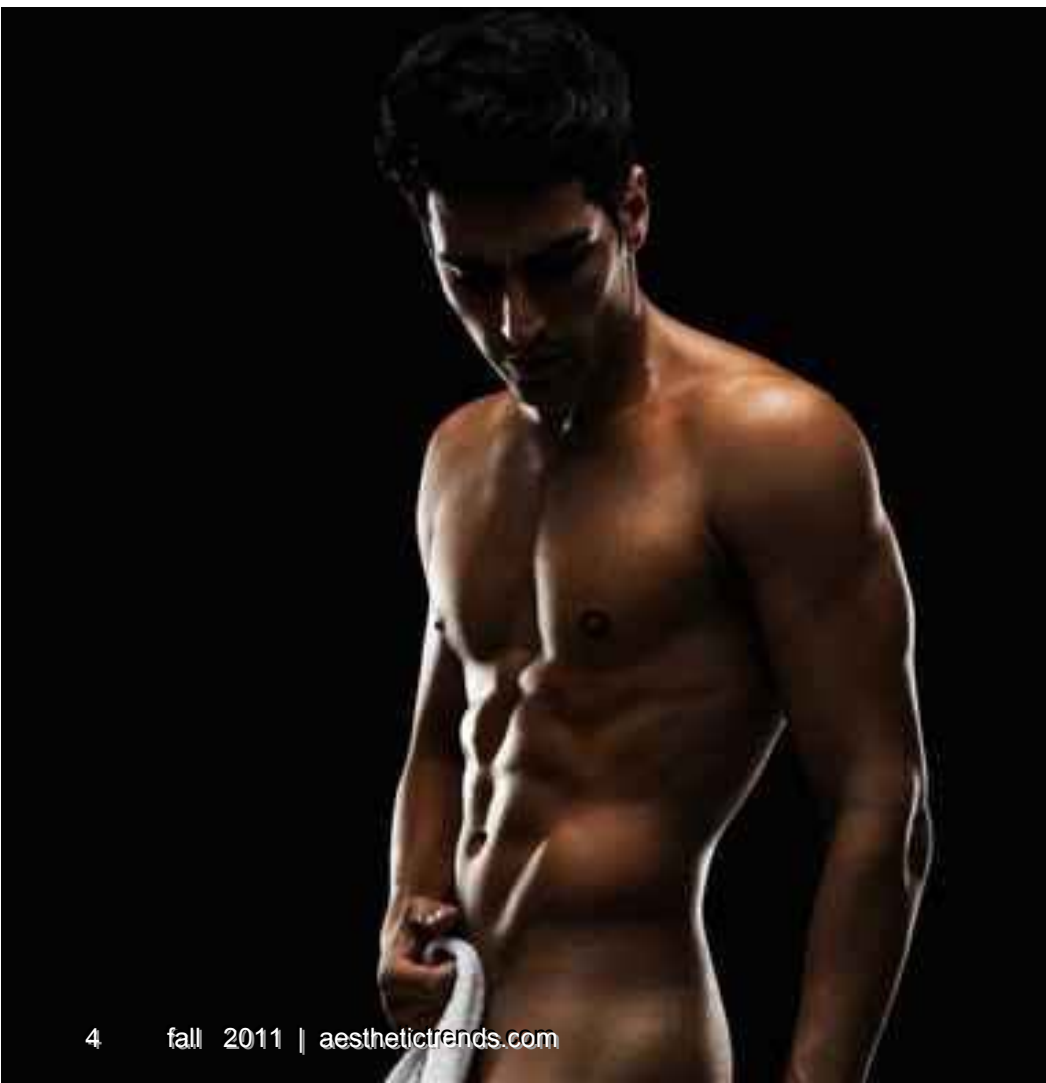
### CLEANING UP THE KITCHEN

This essentially refers to "cleaning up" the neckline, lipline, eyebrows, ears, sideburns, and back of the head to insure that there are no random or "stray" hairs, and will vary depending on hair type and amount, and whether the client is bald.

### MAID SERVICE

Also known as Upstairs Downstairs, involves the removal of superfluous hair from the head, back, neck, and beltline and is usually, but not always, accompanied by waxing services.

Well, there you are, an up-to-the-minute review of the latest in men's skin care. If you do not understand men any better now than you did before, do not feel bad. Nobody else does either. 



### About the Author

**James E. Mason** is a Licensed Master Aesthetician specializing in Anti-Aging Skin Care, Product Knowledge and Development, and Men's Skin Care. His work has appeared in various publications regarding the Aesthetic Industry, and he has a particular interest in the intersection of Medical Esthetics, Trends in the Aesthetic profession, and Anti-Aging Skin Care.