

# Stand Out From the Pack



How to get ahead of National Healthy Skin Month.

**BY NAREN ARULRAJAH**

>> Since 1997, the AAD has provided us with a veritable gift that keeps on giving for dermatology marketing in the form of National Healthy Skin Month.

But why be predictable? Why wait until November to develop and present content that celebrates the skin and all that you and your team have to offer? There is no better way to stand out than to be ahead of the pack. Rather than wait for the eventual influx of generic content linked to this awareness observance, let's get a head start and stay ahead of the competition.

## THINK BEYOND SKIN

Your expertise and treatments are not limited to the skin. This annual campaign presents an opportunity to showcase your capabilities, know-how, consultative guidance, and services related to hair and nails, too! A few examples:

- Put your hair restoration treatments and related offerings under the spotlight. Restore an individual's "crowning glory" and self-confidence, and you have a patient for life.
- Meaningful content, from preventing nail fungus to stopping the itch of athlete's foot, is fair game. The public should be reminded of the diversity and wide-ranging nature of your expertise and services.
- Do not forget about content related to the effects of skin conditions on the hair and nails. Stick to situations that you see most often in your practice. Play up those habits, professional practices, and in-house treatments that have made the biggest difference in your patient's long-term management of complications associated with common skin conditions.

## WARM UP TO MARKETING FOR THE CHILLY SEASON.

The timing of Healthy Skin Month jibes well with communications focused on getting ahead of seasonal concerns and considerations. As much of the country is heading into colder temperatures, remind patients now of the value of regular skin care consultations to address changes to the skin with these seasonal changes. Here are some more ideas to address seasonal issues:

- Highlight how guidance is tailored to minimize seasonal

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concerns such as dry skin and windburn effectively.

- Illustrate how the products that may have worked for the likes of dryness when patients were younger may not be as suitable or effective for their current, more “advanced” skin.
- Combine the concepts mentioned above—thinking beyond skin and embracing the chill—to explore the intersection of nail and hair treatments and seasonal nail/hair problems, such as dry scalp, winter shedding, and brittle nails.
- Helpful suggestions and associated “calls to action” (to reach out to and engage with your team) should touch on the management of common existing problems that are irritated by the cold, other weather-related changes, and by potential stressors induced by the myriad obligations competing for our attention by year's end.

## LIGHT A FIRE

Encourage and promote “early bird” scheduling to get ahead of the holiday busyness. Early bird discounts, specials, or other perks should also be in the works and shouted from the rooftops (via social) to further entice patients to schedule appointments now before the mad rush. Incentives may be aligned with existing loyalty, membership, or “points” programs.

This is a welcome habit to get into every fall because pushing for early scheduling sends a message to your team that you care. Your staff will appreciate the consideration of appointment management, as it makes balancing family and day-to-day commitments plausible once the holiday season reaches a fever pitch.

## PROMOTE “OUT-OF-SEASON” SERVICES

It is unlikely that patients are thinking of laser hair removal during the dead of winter, but maybe they should be! Get them thinking about cosmetic services that require sun



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avoidance to minimize the risk of post-treatment complications caused by UV exposure. It may be easier for patients to comply with after-care following laser hair reduction or skin resurfacing during these shorter, darker days. That being said, an entire category of meaningful content could be created about the year-round threats to healthy skin from the sun. For example:

- Posts on blogs and social media, articles on websites, and video and podcast content may explore the need and rationale for wearing proper sun protection and taking appropriate measures even when it is cloudy or overcast.
- This conversation invites content around the misconceptions that you often hear from patients. Inventory those myths and FAQs. What do you continuously hear that is just plain wrong? Do these misconceptions still extend to questions about selecting the “right SPF”? How much sunscreen is enough? As always, we encourage readers to “toot their own horn.” Promote relevant proprietary or in-house product lines.

### THE “GIFT” OF HEALTHY SKIN

Promote in-house membership plans, loyalty programs, gift cards, and the like. As the end of the year approaches, many have never been more stressed—nor more driven to impress. Encourage, preview, and get your patients excited about giving the gift of healthy, radiant, youthful skin—either to themselves or to deserving family members. Everything from gifting a relaxing spa day to cosmetic services to start 2024 off right may be fair game.

By stepping up your game and delivering such content

ahead of time and before the rush of the holidays, you also get maximum mileage out of content. Blog, social posts, and other forms of communication can be repurposed or updated slightly as needed and for utmost relevancy and timeliness.

Take advantage of communications “at the ready,” courtesy of product and technology manufacturer sites and local and national professional and industry organizations. A good jumping-off point is reviewing awareness initiatives. Connect the dots back to the sponsors or hosts of given efforts. These organizations strive to make the most out of these campaigns, and there is often a multitude of information available to the public or membership, which can be personalized to suit respective practices, services, areas of expertise, geographies, and demographics.

### THINK UNIQUE

Emphasize the healthy part of National Healthy Skin Month. Consider communications related to how skin, nails, and hair health can reflect systemic health. Dive into how healthy skin, hair, and nails help support overall health, well-being, optimal function, and quality of life. We can do this without being alarmist. We all know it is human to see every bump, lump, rash, redness, or other change and think the very worst. Take the tack of emphasizing how partnerships with your team and the services and care you offer play into happier, more fulfilling, and richer lives for your patients. ■

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