

# Build a Marketing Strategy Around Awareness “Holidays”



Insights on how to spotlight three upcoming observances to market your practice.

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>> There are awareness days, weeks, and months, as well as awareness “holidays” for seemingly all issues and topics. They range from the light-hearted (National Doughnut Day, anyone?) to the deathly serious (Genocide Awareness Month).

As clinicians, there are numerous opportunities to harness the multitude of advocacy and issue-oriented options, including:

- They can serve as jumping-off points to engage prospective and loyal patients and partners in conversation.
- When leveraged well, these opportunities also support existing internal health-oriented efforts and initiatives.
- They can translate over to real dollars when intentional marketing efforts are aligned in a timely and logical fashion to specific days, weeks, and months.

**Timing is all-important.** Your team needs to stay ahead of upcoming health-related observances. It pays off to have a calendar that has isolated only those dermatology- and health-specific observances that resonate with your community. That way, your team can smartly craft and deploy content and other forms of marketing collateral in a manner that clearly ties to the relevant services, expertise, capabilities, technologies, and products offered by your practice.

## MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES ON THE HORIZON

With the fall season upon us and the “sprint” toward year’s end now underway, you may want to take advantage of seasonal and timely awareness observances. Spotlighted are a few of those days and timeframes that your practices should be aware of, as awareness is the first step toward communication efforts that get real, dramatic results. You and your team can then focus. By that, your messaging, communication, and strategy can be centered on the specific disease, condition, lifestyle attribute, or other skin

or health issue presented by your editorial calendar. Let this calendar be your guide when crafting, delivering, and measuring strategic communications. After all, what gets measured gets managed and done!

The following list highlights dermatology-friendly observances as “case studies” slated for the end of 2022 and the start of 2023.

### NATIONAL HEALTHY SKIN MONTH (NOVEMBER)

A “granddaddy” of health care observances, National Healthy Skin Month is sponsored by the American Academy of Dermatology (AAD) Association. The AAD can be a source of important content, which may be reworked to suit your practice’s approach, expertise, and menu of services. Certainly, dermatology professionals like yourself can showcase skincare consultations, skin cleaning, and moisturizing techniques. Do you have proprietary skincare products? Shout about them from the (social media) rooftops! Be sure to have content such as blog posts accompanied by multimedia collateral.

Many topics associated with promoting and sustaining healthy skin lend themselves well to videos. Do not just “tell” your community about your line of cleansers. “Show” them what makes your cleanser different. You can also show and demonstrate the best ways to clean and/or moisturize the face. As you demonstrate proper technique, you can also illustrate the biggest mistakes that people make when, for instance, washing or hydrating very dry or sensitive skin. In many parts of our country, the “deep freeze” is already well underway during November. So, this awareness month presents a great time to provide meaningful tips on how to prevent or manage the likes of windburn, too.

### WORLD CANCER DAY (FEBRUARY 4)

An initiative of the Union for International Cancer

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Control, this global observance is not centered explicitly on cancers affecting the skin. Yet, what better time than winter to remind patients, prospects, and partners of the importance of professional skin checks and skin protection products and behaviors? After all, consumers are likely getting bombarded with messaging from other dermatology providers in May to coincide with Melanoma Monday and Skin Cancer Awareness Month. However, your competition is likely not leveraging this February World Cancer Day and the days and weeks leading up to it. So, the dermatology marketing “space” is far less “noisy” in February than in sunny May.

Why not craft social posts and content for your website on the key reasons sunscreen is a “must” even on the most overcast of days? Or go beyond preventive tactics and products. Complement prevention-focused marketing strategies with content developed around your unique therapies and onsite capabilities. For instance, walk your community through Mohs Micrographic Surgery. Showcase the special tools and technologies that you may use to evaluate or remove precancers and cancerous lesions.

### **PATIENT SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK (MARCH 12 TO MARCH 18)**

The opportunities to highlight your experience, amenities, training, certifications, accreditation, and specific therapies are endless! Sponsored partly by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, the week’s activities are centered on actions to improve the entire health care system. In recent years, the American Board of Cosmetic Surgery has weighed in about the measures and steps the industry has taken to reduce adverse events and support patient health and wellbeing in aesthetic medicine. This content coincided with a previous Patient Safety Awareness Week and can serve as great fodder for your practice’s strategic insights.

We have not specifically discussed marketing cosmetic

or aesthetic expertise and services thus far. This awareness opportunity provides a great time and way to communicate your specific aesthetic offerings through the lens of patient comfort and safety. Consider (and highlight) the safeguards and precautions you take when administering certain procedures or technologies that may be novel to your practice and team.

Additionally, any patient safety-centric events or initiatives can function as “conversation-starters” to revisit with your community the protocols you have taken since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. It is not a stretch to also remind the consumer of the lingering effects of COVID-19 on the skin, hair, and nails among those many individuals who have been directly affected by it. These reminders are powerful; they serve to distinguish your practice as a responsible community steward. After all, you understand that COVID-19 is not yet “history.” Its effects remain with us today.

### **AWARENESS DAYS MATTER**

It is one thing to be aware of awareness days; however, it is quite another to leverage the right ones in the correct fashion and at the right time. By their nature, these opportunities demand the foresight that supports the development and launch of smart strategies that align with the specific awareness “window.”

We rarely get desirable results when our teams are rushed. Natural opportunities are missed. Amateur mistakes are made. Consider the establishment of a standalone editorial calendar, limited to these observances, as a great habit to get into that will drive results year after year.

As our awareness of certain conditions, technologies, and treatments evolve, it is also critical to evaluate new observances. Add them to the list sooner rather than later to stay one step ahead of the savvy, well-read health care consumer. After all, exceptional care and patient advocacy is not a seasonal phenomenon or daily event to you; it is a fundamental, year-round, ongoing, and noble mission for your dermatology practice. ■

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