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Best OF THE Best
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Dr. Steven Davis, founder of **Davis Cosmetic Plastic Surgery**, stands at the forefront of a new era of personalized regenerative medicine.

At the Edge of a **New Frontier**

by **BILL DONAHUE**



In the 2024 film, *The Substance*, the actress Demi Moore plays an aging Hollywood celebrity who believes her best days are behind her. She then takes the bold step of procuring a powerful serum that enables her to reclaim her youth and, in the **process**, reinvent herself.

Although the film's premise may seem **like** science fiction, it's not as far-fetched as it sounds. In fact, Dr. Steven L. Davis says it's already here—and he has begun **harnessing** its power in his practice, **Davis Cosmetic Plastic Surgery**. Dr. Davis's patients **can** now use the stem cells, **fibroblasts**, and ker-

atinocytes **warehoused** in their own hair follicles **to rejuvenate the skin**, kickstart hair regrowth, and **otherwise** achieve a more **youthful appearance**.

How it works: Approximately 50 follicles **are harvested from** the back of the head. **The follicles are then** sent to an outside provider **called Acorn**, which then manufactures **12 vials of secretome**, or serum, **that can** then be returned to the patient to **unlock** one's full potential. Patients can use the secretome immediately or shortly **after**; each 12-vial batch has a shelf life of **approximately** one year after the serum is

Portrait by Alison Dunlap; surgical photo courtesy of Davis Cosmetic Plastic Surgery



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**—DR. STEVEN DAVIS,
DAVIS COSMETIC
PLASTIC SURGERY**

made. More importantly, patients can “bank” their cells in perpetuity; a process known as cryopreservation freezes the harvested cells, which can then be used to create more of the secretome for future use.

“I like the phrase ‘bank your beauty,’ because that’s essentially what you’re doing,” he says. “The secretome carries all the growth factors of platelet-rich plasma—exosomes and proteins—all these wonderful ingredients that can restore youthful qualities to the hair and skin. The genius is that we have a way to preserve patients’ youngest and healthiest stem cells, which can be used to make this secretome for the rest of your life. It’s like freezing a moment in time.”

Dr. Davis’s practice is one of only 15 across the country to currently offer the service. These 15 clinics, which were hand selected by Acorn, are generating vital clinical data for use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration prior to a far more expansive rollout in 2025.

“The serum is an autologous substance, meaning it comes from your own body, compared with exogenous products, which come from other sources,” he says. “The

cells in the serum will actually be able to communicate with other cells in the area. If, for example, we want to regrow the hair, we stimulate the scalp in some fashion—microneedling, etc.—and when we break the skin, we use the serum to communicate to the cells, ‘Let’s repair this, let’s get more youthful.’”

Dr. Davis believes the future of aesthetic medicine will rely heavily on autologous solutions. Aside from Acorn, he cites products such as Sculptra, a biostimulatory aesthetic injectable that can incite the natural production of collagen and, in turn, smooth facial wrinkles and tighten the skin. Furthermore, he sees Acorn’s technology as the opening salvo in a new age of “personalized regenerative medicine.” While his primary interest is in aesthetic medicine, he says the future applications are nearly unlimited to include virtually every other area of medicine.

The secretome is reminiscent of PRP in that it harnesses the body’s own regenerative power. Besides being able to preserve the harvested cells as new uses emerge, another advantage over traditional PRP is that procuring the serum does not require a blood draw. At

present, Dr. Davis says the cost of “preserving the best younger, healthier version of yourself” through this means of regenerative medicine is approximately the same as the cost of PRP treatments. That said, he anticipates that the cost will change once Acorn expands the service to a wider rollout.

The technology dovetails nicely into another new enterprise that has Dr. Davis bullish about 2025: the Davis Aesthetic Weight Loss Center. The center helps patients who want to lose weight with the help of GLP-1 medications such as semaglutide and tirzepatide, under the direction of a qualified physician who can take a big-picture view of each patient’s progress.

“It’s wonderful that patients are losing weight, but when you’re doing it without supervision, no one is watching what’s happening with the face and body,” he says. “We’re seeing cases of what we call ‘Ozempic face,’ ‘Ozempic butt,’ and ‘Ozempic breasts,’ where people have laxity of the skin, an aging appearance, and other unwanted issues brought about by the weight loss. I believe that with a supervised personalized approach we can address all that from the beginning.

“Not only can we provide the medication, but we can coach you along, provide nutrition guidance, and talk about exercise to promote more muscle,” he continues. “We also have all the skin-tightening devices and other non-surgical tools, as well as surgical interventions, if any of those options would be necessary. Using these tools, combined with the regenerative serum, is going to help patients get the results they’re hoping for.”

Dr. Davis has seen a great deal of excitement around regenerative medicine, in part because of the wide open road of future applications. He’s excited, too; in fact, he had cells from his own hair follicles harvested and cryopreserved so he can make use of them, when and if needed.

“A lot of people want to do things as healthy as possible these days, and this seems like a healthy way to address the anti-aging issue,” he says. “With this approach, everything is coming from your own body; they’re your stem cells. The idea is that you can literally bank your stem cells at this age and wait until you’re ready to use them later. It’s a brand new frontier, and I think the potential to do amazing things with it is almost unlimited.” ■



Davis Cosmetic Plastic Surgery

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