

Case Study: Adding Aesthetics - building a practice from the inside out

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Dr. Gregory Samano

Why did you add aesthetic treatments to your practice?

I added aesthetics to my practice about five years ago due to the pressures of managed care and decreasing reimbursements, plus the day to day pressures of running a Family Practice. In the beginning, my approach was pretty simple, I wanted to add extra income, a new challenge and something fun to my practice.

Has your aesthetic practice changed over time?

I started about five years ago initially doing Botox, then added Smartlipo TriPlex about 3 ½ years ago based on the demand for body contouring procedures. I've been doing family practice for 15 years, so I didn't want to lose that because I love family practice. Yet, the nice thing about adding aesthetics is that even with all the changes in health-care, I really don't have to worry. Peers ask me how the Affordable Healthcare Act is going to affect me, and I really feel like I'm above the fray. I can pay the bills with the aesthetics and do family practice for fun.

How did you start to market your aesthetic practice?

In the beginning, I made the transition by marketing my new aesthetic services by simply putting brochures in the rooms. Plus, Cynosure gives you a marketing package when you purchase a device and puts you on their website so patients can locate your office. I also updated my website for patients that search online. Originally, I grew the practice organically from my family practice and it's probably where I get the majority of my patients today.

Did you leverage your current practice patient base?

I think the difference is the vast majority of your current patients will grow with you as you start an aesthetic practice in your office. There are a huge number of people that want these services and when you add aesthetics to your practice, they're just going to ask you about them. You just make it available by putting out some information, so when they're waiting for you, they read through it. If you see them looking at it, you ask them "Are you interested in it?", and for the most part, they're really grateful that you just want to talk to them about it and educate them.

What have you done to continue growing?

Usually, once a patient has had one procedure, then they're your patient for life. That's one of the keys about adding Smartlipo TriPlex to your practice; it's just a lot easier to grow. It's a low overhead way to add another revenue stream to the practice because you really only have your fixed costs and procedure costs. It's kind of a no-brainer financially, because the numbers with Smartlipo TriPlex work out so well. When you look at the number of patients needed to be profitable each month, it's a very small number based on the percentage of people who want the procedure.

"I'm able to direct my practice and my life the way I want by having more independence."

- Gregory Samano, MD

How did you learn about Smartlipo TriPlex and laser lipolysis?

As a family practitioner, I was initially skeptical it was a viable option or something that I could be successful adding to my practice. However, after observing some cases, learning about the technology and speaking with other physicians; I became convinced it was a procedure I could add. Then Cynosure sent me for training to learn from an experienced physician and I went to an office for several days doing cases and didactic work. As a family practice doctor, I have excellent results using Smartlipo TriPlex and the reason is that I'm not doing liposuction; I'm doing Smartlipo.

What are some of the benefits of the Smartlipo TriPlex platform technology?

When you're working with lasers your top concerns are efficacy and safety. The Smartlipo TriPlex has a cannula called the ThermaGuide™ which provides real time measurement of the temperature below the skin. The benefit is you can set your treatment temperature and if you reach that temperature, the machine warns you and then shuts off. When I perform a procedure the temperature guide is always active. The other nice feature is the SmartSense™ accelerometer which senses your motion when you move the cannula during the procedure. If you stop moving, the device stops firing, and basically keeps a steady rate of firing no matter how fast or slow you're moving. This lets you focus on where you are and where you're directing the laser and not how fast or slow you move your hand.

What procedures do you typically perform using Smartlipo TriPlex?

I'm pretty conservative, so when I started I limited myself to the abdomen and my first 20 cases were abdominal cases. As I felt more comfortable, I expanded to the flanks, hips, buttocks, and inner thighs. Now, I basically treat anywhere that's considered appropriate and safe.

How has adding Smartlipo TriPlex impacted your practice revenues?

My goal at the beginning was to bring home the same amount of money and grow my practice. At a time when you have declining reimbursements for providing medical services, we've consistently grown every year. I've been able to grow from a member of a group in a family practice in a large office to where I now use that entire building. More importantly, I'm able to direct my practice and my life the way I want to by having more independence. Smartlipo funds the rest of my aesthetic business and any other aesthetic offerings are just profit.



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