

COMPELLING COMMENTS

History in The Making: The Transformative Impact of TikTok™ on Dermatology

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INTRODUCTION

Have you heard the terms ‘jello skin’, ‘retinol sandwiching’, or ‘skin cycling’? If not, you probably haven’t ventured much into the skincare side of the popular social media platform, TikTok™.

DISCUSSION

TikTok™, launched in 2016, has transformed the way in which people consume and share information¹. Through its short-form videos, TikTok™ goes beyond entertainment and has served as a hub for sharing information, including in the field of education and healthcare. This platform has provided dermatology professionals with a unique space to share their expertise to the public. Dermatologists, such as Dr. Muneeb Shah (@dermdoctor) and Dr. Zion Ko Lamm (@dr.zionko), have taken this opportunity to share their expert opinions, debunk myths, and address common skincare concerns. In fact, in an analysis of dermatology on TikTok™ completed in 2021, 39% of the 544 videos analyzed were created by healthcare providers². As technology continues to serve as a source for patients to obtain information, it is crucial for healthcare professionals to embrace this platform and be aware of the

trends so they can actively participate in shaping the future of dermatology.

It’s important to note that with the vast amount of information and videos on TikTok™, there exists a potential for misinformation. For example, a trend termed ‘reverse skincare’ emerged in 2022 and was made popular by influencer, Ava Lee (@glowwithava). This trend advocated for the reversal in order of skin care product application, starting with occlusives³. Since its emergence, many dermatologists have debunked this trend as ineffective and potentially harmful depending on the individual³. By learning from the past, healthcare professionals have the opportunity to use TikTok™ to correct misinformation and promote evidence-based practices to the public.

In addition to providing a space for dermatologists, TikTok™ has played an important role in increasing public awareness of dermatologic conditions. In the same study mentioned prior, videos with the hashtag of the top five dermatologic diagnoses gained a total of 2.5 billion views². With patients generating 45% of the study’s videos, it’s clear that these firsthand accounts are also very prevalent on the platform². Many users have openly discussed their experiences and often arduous journeys with various skin

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conditions. These individuals not only have served to raise awareness of their condition, but some, such as Alex Griswold (@alexgriswold), have also been alerted of possible life-threatening skin conditions, encouraging them to seek professional advice. Through fostering a sense of community, this social media platform has offered solace to those facing dermatologic conditions, reminding them they are not alone and to seek professional help when they need it.

<https://www.skininc.com/business/trends/news/22605108/dr-dennis-gross-skincare-the-risks-of-tiktoks-reverse-skin-care-trend>

CONCLUSION

While a short-lived history thus far, TikTok™ has already transformed the healthcare industry, especially in the field of dermatology. It's essential for healthcare providers to remain attuned to this emerging platform so they can learn from the past and further enhance their patient care going forward.

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