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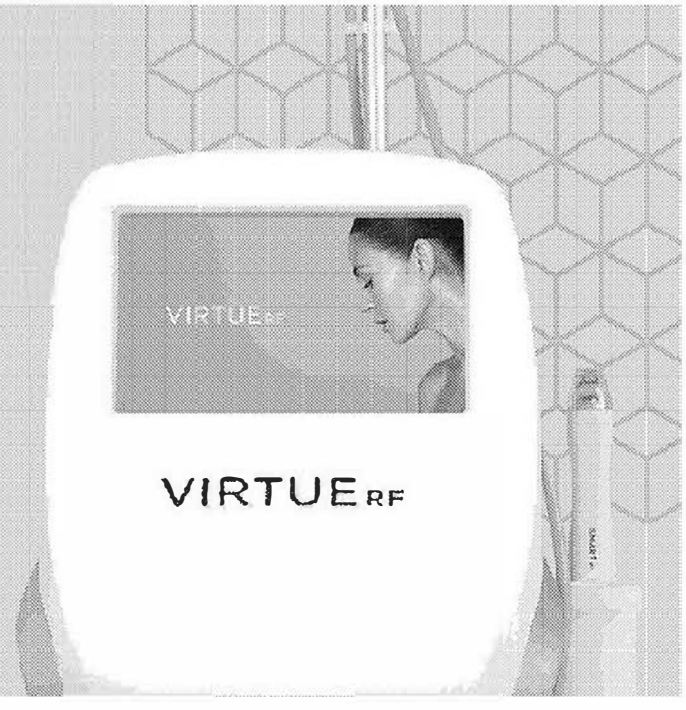
OBSERVATIONS IN AESTHETICS

Innovations in RF Microneedling: A closer look at VirtueRF



FEATURING:

Leslie Apgar, MD
OBGYN, Med Spa Owner

Bobby Awadalla, MD
Dermatologist

Andrew Gear MD
Plastic Surgeon

Rosalyn George, MD
Dermatologist

Thomas Griffin Jr., MD
Dermatologist

Jordana Herschthal, MD
Dermatologist

RF microneedling has become one of the most sought-after non-invasive treatments. However, despite the many new technologies that have been introduced, few have offered notable advancements and differentiating features for providers. Instead, practitioners were left to decipher between devices and to determine what made the most sense for their patients and their businesses.

As the newest innovation in the space and first platform RF microneedling device, we interviewed leading physicians about why they integrated VirtueRF into their practice and their experience with the technology. Below are excerpts taken from these discussions.

Q: When looking to invest in a new device, what is most important to you?

Jordana Herschthal, MD: When I evaluate new devices, I look at patient outcomes, ease of use, patient comfort, price, consumables, and the maintenance program- Cartessa and the VirtueRF checked all of these boxes for me.

Bobby Awadalla, MD: Patients want results when they get cosmetic treatments so this is the most important thing that we look for when evaluating new technology. We want our patients to love their outcomes, and they love the experience with this device.

Leslie Apgar, MD: Most important is that a device does what it is intended to do and in the way that it is described. Many times a device is sold with settings that are tolerable during a demonstration but these settings would never be used in real time because they are not effective. Revenue expectations must be attainable as well. While many devices seem like a really good idea in the beginning, the reality of monthly payments versus revenue stream can be daunting. Additionally, the integrity of the company with whom I am dealing is paramount. Cartessa has been a great partner and the return on investment with VirtueRF has been impressive.

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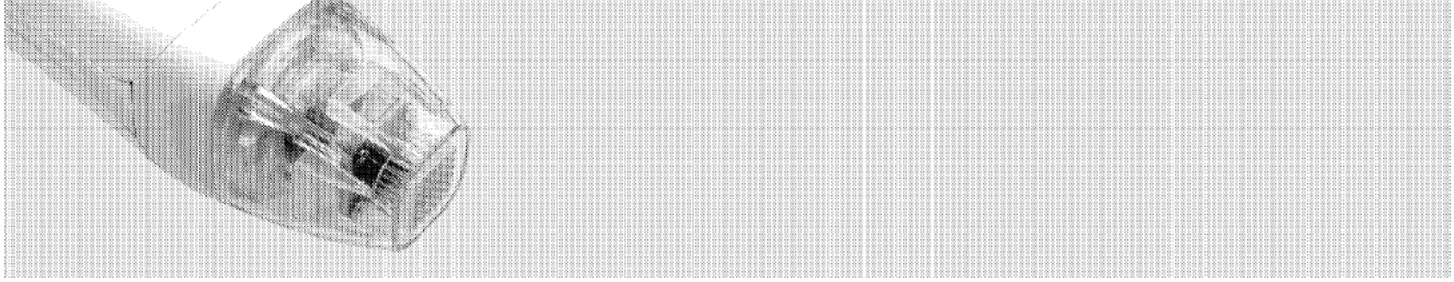


Q: Why did you choose VirtueRF for your practice?

Leslie Apgar, MD: I chose VirtueRF because of the ability to break down the energy into sub-pulses - it makes the treatment even more comfortable. The enhanced ability to customize treatments with VirtueRF is a big win. Every patient is different and this feature allows us to address each unique skincare goal and concern.

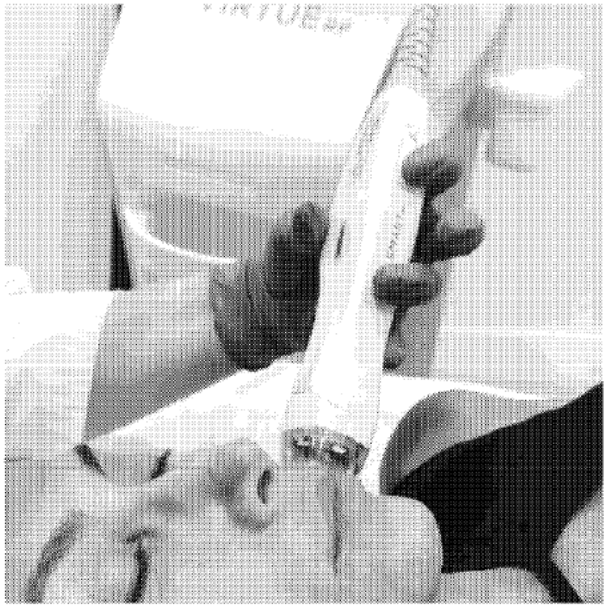
Thomas Griffin Jr., MD: I chose VirtueRF because of its ability to deliver great results without the downtime associated with fractionated lasers. Many of our patients cannot tolerate discomfort and do not want downtime. We've found VirtueRF to deliver on both patient experience and results.

Jordana Herschthal, MD: We chose VirtueRF Microneedling for our practice because it is well tolerated and yields great results with essentially no downtime. Additionally, it is delegatable and well priced.

Q: What is VirtueRF's top feature and/or benefit given your experience thus far?

Jordana Herscthal, MD: Tolerability, lack of downtime, and results are the most pressing concerns for my patients and my experience with VirtueRF has delivered on all three. My patients love the improvement in their pores and general skin texture without the downtime.

Leslie Apgar, MD: The top benefit of VirtueRF is the flawless skin and glow that patients receive. The pore size is minimized and the skin is brighter with improved texture and decreased laxity. Patients are reporting that others notice an overall brightened glow to their complexion. I explain to the patients that what I want for them is a canvas that is so smooth and flawless that they no longer feel the need to use foundation. My patients' confidence is boosted by their improved appearance. VirtueRF is a win every single time.



Q: Who in your office performs the VirtueRF treatments and what feedback have they had?

Thomas Griffin Jr., MD: My two aestheticians and I perform the treatments. We all love it. The handpiece is so much lighter and more ergonomic than other devices and the user interface is easy to navigate.

Jordana Herschthal, MD: In my practice, my medical assistants perform the treatments. They love that the treatments are fast and that the technology is easy to use. They also enjoy the positive feedback they receive from the patients during treatments and after.

Bobby Awadalla, MD: My Physician Assistant and I perform the VirtueRF treatments in the office. The treatments are easy to perform and are usually done in about 30-45 minutes.

Leslie Apgar, MD: I perform VirtueRF treatments along with my NP and RNs. They are astonished that a treatment that lacks social downtime can provide real benefits and changes to the skin. My patients are delighted that any redness tends to fade in a few hours.

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Q: How has VirtueRF's Sub-Pulse Technology benefited your practice?

Bobby Awadalla, MD: The ability to break up the energy with the Sub-Pulse feature has definitely helped decrease the patient's discomfort without having to lower the energy level. This means we can administer higher energy levels to get great results but give the patient a better overall experience.

Jordana Herschthal, MD: VirtueRF's Sub-Pulse Technology allows me to deliver higher energy at a more comfortable setting. Prior to Sub-Pulse, we would have to turn down the RF energy.

Leslie Apgar, MD: Sub-Pulse Technology allows me to use higher RF settings than I would otherwise be able to use while still delivering a comfortable experience. The customization available by having the ability to deliver energy in this way means that even the most delicate of patients can receive meaningful treatments with the VirtueRF.

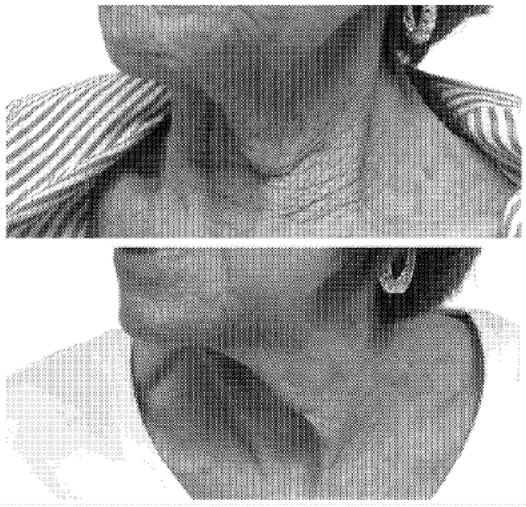
> *"VirtueRF's Sub-Pulse technology gives us the ability to put more energy into the skin, more comfortably. We can now perform better, more efficacious treatments without sacrificing patient experience."*
>
> **- Thomas Griffin Jr., MD**

Q: How has the VirtueRF's ability to treat with 1 MHz and 2 MHz benefited your practice?

Andrew Gear, MD: The ability to treat with both 1 MHz and 2 MHz has provided us with even more flexibility in terms of the amount of energy we can deliver while minimizing pain.

Leslie Apgar, MD: Having both 1 MHz and 2 MHz allows the provider to use their intuition and the art of medicine to accommodate whomever is on their treatment bed. That flexibility breeds confidence in the provider and patient alike.

Jordana Herschthal, MD: The option to choose to treat with either 1 MHz or 2 MHz reassures us that we can treat every skin type safely. For darker skin types, I often start with 2 MHz to assess tolerability.



Courtesy of Uptown Medical Aesthetics - 4 Weeks Post, 1 Treatment

Q: Do you combine modalities with VirtueRF? If so, what treatments and why?

Rosalyn George, MD: I am a true believer in combination therapy and we offer comprehensive treatment plans for all of our patients. We frequently combine VirtueRF and CoolPeel (a CO2 treatment using the Tetra CO2) on the same day and patients really like this particular combination.

Bobby Awadalla, MD: We frequently combine modalities in our practice. With VirtueRF, we have many options we can add like laser resurfacing technologies.

Jordana Herschthal, MD: I love combining different procedures with VirtueRF. I specifically combine VirtueRF with CoolPeel, Discovery Pico, or IPL depending on the skin concerns I am treating. Combining modalities saves patients time and money as it often achieves the desired outcomes faster.

Q: Are there any patient populations with which you are seeing particularly good results?

Leslie Apgar, MD: My acne scarring patients are the most emotionally motivated and so they are prepared for aggressive treatments right out of the gate. Because of this, their results are quite striking after three treatments and they are quick to send in their friends. In my experience, this is the only procedure in this industry where husbands/boyfriends/partners not only notice their other half's skin is improving and comment on it, but they then come in to have VirtueRF treatments themselves.

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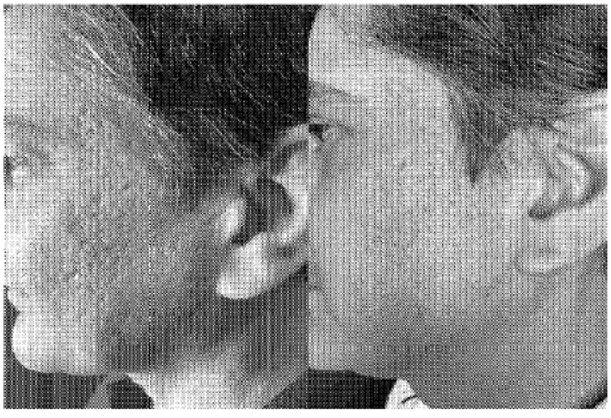
Rosalyn George, MD: I have found that all patients can benefit from a VirtueRF treatment. However, I will say that I have been most impressed with how well this is working in my patients in the 65+ year age range. There are many patients that have had every treatment in our office and for the first time, they come in and say they are seeing a difference. I also love this treatment for my patients in their 40's who are just starting to see changes in their skin.

Jordana Herschthal, MD: The best results I've seen with VirtueRF are in the teenage to late 40's. This device is my go-to for pore reduction and acne scars as well as overall texture improvement.



Courtesy of Ariya Aesthetics - 4 Weeks Post, 1 Treatment

Q: What effect has the VirtueRF had on your practice financially? Have you seen an increase in revenue?

Andrew Gear, MD: The VirtueRF has increased the efficacy of our skin rejuvenation treatments. I was an early adopter (probably the first in Charlotte, NC) to use Inmode's Fractora and it was painful and people hated it. My experience with the VirtueRF has been much more successful not only for my practice, but for my patients as well.

Thomas Griffin Jr., MD: VirtueRF has provided us with a continuation of aesthetic services throughout the year as opposed to having patients disappear in the summertime.

Leslie Apgar, MD: Our upgrade to VirtueRF changed our practice. Our revenue went up tremendously and these procedures allow for every single person who enters the facility to be treated with this technology. It does not discriminate based on skin type, age or gender. That is incredibly empowering for my staff. They have seen the results from hundreds of procedures performed and they can recommend a series of VirtueRF treatments to new patients with confidence and integrity.

> *"The most astounding results we have seen is with acne scarring. It's a game changer for these patients that have had to deal with these terrible scars for years."*
>
> **- Bobby Awadalla, MD**

Q: How has your experience been working with Cartessa Aesthetics?

Thomas Griffin Jr., MD: Cartessa Aesthetics is one of two companies that are in constant contact with me and my staff – and not because they are trying to sell us more devices. Cartessa has helped my team with social media strategies, email marketing, patient acquisition and in general, has been there to support us when we need anything.

Leslie Apgar, MD: I have found Cartessa Aesthetics to be a class act. From the top down, the company has integrity and genuinely wants to carve out a different and better place for themselves in the aesthetic device industry. Because of my positive experiences time and time again, when new technology is presented by Cartessa, I give them my undivided attention. They have earned my trust. When I have voiced my suggestions for improvement and feedback as they grow at an unprecedented rate, I am met with warmth, understanding, and receptivity, which is not often the case.

To learn more about the VirtueRF or Cartessa Aesthetics, visit www.cartessaaesthetics.com

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