

Chasing Aha Moments

Amy Forman Taub, MD, FAAD, the Medical Director and Managing Partner at Advanced Dermatology, a Forefront Dermatology Practice, in Lincolnshire and Glencoe, IL, divides her time between the clinic and the lab. Over the years, she has played a big part in research that has led to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval of Epiduo (adapalene/benzoyl peroxide) and low-dose Duac Gel for acne, photodynamic therapy for actinic keratosis on the arms and hands, and toxins including incobotulinumtoxinA (Xeomin, Merz Aesthetics).

In 2015, Dr. Taub co-founded SkinQRI, a cosmeceutical company focusing on hair restoration and addressing difficult cosmetic and clinical skin issues. She spoke to *The Dermatology Digest*® about the lure of research and what keeps her engaged in finding the next best thing.

TDD: How much time do you spend in the lab vs. the clinic?

AMY FORMAN TAUB, MD, FAAD: “I spend about 25% of my time conducting research and 75% in the clinic seeing patients.”

TDD: What drew you to the research aspect of your job?

DR. TAUB: “I wanted to know the answers to questions that weren’t known and/or trying to improve the results of products and procedures, or invent new ones for unmet needs.”

TDD: What do you find most rewarding about the research/discovery process?

DR. TAUB: “The aha moments, and discovering that what you thought of actually works!”

TDD: What are some current unmet needs in dermatology?

DR. TAUB: “Deep wrinkles without major downtime, restoring large areas (i.e., on the body) of aging/sun-damaged skin in a cost-effective manner, melasma, inflammatory states such



as post-inflammatory erythema and pigmentation, atrophic scars, and keloids.”

TDD: Tell us about some of the research you have conducted over the years.

DR. TAUB: “There are different types of research—some for companies who need to have clinical trials to get their medication or device approved, and some where you have an idea and want to prove it. The former can be exciting as you get to try something new first and help to develop it, especially in the case of the eMatrix, a device that utilizes fractional bipolar radiofrequency (RF) energy to improve wrinkles, scars, and skin texture. My favorites are when I have an idea and get either a company to help finance it or I just pay for it myself, since it is my idea and I have a genuine interest in studying the outcome.”

TDD: Tell us about SkinQRI and why/how you co-founded it with researcher James Bartholomeusz.

DR. TAUB: “We formed SkinQRI as a collaboration at a time when James was going through a transition in his work life and had time to talk through his ideas for hair loss, something he had at the time and which was on the upswing as a concern in dermatology offices. He had found a Korean chemist who could manufacture biomimetic human growth factors, which was rare at the time, so we were able to put together a formula that contained all of the elements that were needed for hair growth. Most products or procedures only address one facet of hair growth, and we wanted to address all phases. It has taken 10 years to get to this point when many in the industry are aware of KeraFactor.”

TDD: What does the research show about the safety and efficacy of KeraFactor?

DR. TAUB: “KeraFactor truly does encourage growth in all the different aspects of hair growth, from the hair follicles to the blood vessels and the hair shaft and bulge. It also does it in a way that is drug-free and doesn’t cause excess shedding or side effects. Clinical studies have shown that combining KeraFactor serum with laser-assisted delivery can lead to significant improvements in scalp health and hair growth. In a 2022 single-blind study of patients with mild-to-moderate androgenetic alopecia, participants experienced an average 26% increase in hair density and a 19% increase in hair shaft diameter at six months. The treatment was well-tolerated with no reported adverse effects.”¹

TDD: What’s next for the brand?

DR. TAUB: “We’ve tried to focus on hair because it is a lot to educate and promote so we didn’t want to get our attention diluted too much, especially since we both have other jobs. We are looking at a post-procedure healing serum and something for unwanted pigmentation. Stay tuned.” **Da.**



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REFERENCE:

1. Taub AF, Calderhead RG, Li J. Fractional thulium laser combined with a topical growth factor serum increases hair density and thickness in male and female androgenic alopecia: A pilot study. *Hair Transplant Forum International*. 2022;32(2):48–51. <https://www.ishrs-htforum.org/content/32/2/48>

DISCLOSURES: Amy Forman Taub, MD, FAAD, is a stockholder/owner at AbbVie, Forefront Dermatology, Medicell Technologies LLC, and SkinQri, LLC. She conducts research for AbbVie/Allergan Aesthetics, Cynosure Lutronic, and Sofwave. Dr. Taub is also a member of the advisory boards at AbbVie/Allergan Aesthetics, Lumisique Skincare, OneSkin, and Topix Skincare. She has received honoraria from AbbVie/Allergan Aesthetics, Cynosure/Lutronic, and Sofwave.