

Meet Dr. Daniel Wasserman of Skin Wellness Physicians



▲ Daniel I. Wasserman, M.D. Photo submitted.

Within the first few moments of my interview with Dr. Wasserman I felt completely relaxed. You know how you get when you go to the Doctor's office. You feel somewhat apprehensive. Don't really know why, but we all seem to feel that way. My old friend and physician, Dr. Bob Folsom used to call it, "White coat syndrome." Maybe that is why Dr. Wasserman was wearing blue. I should have asked him.

Dr. Daniel I. Wasserman grew up in Syracuse, New York. "The American equivalent of Siberia," he said. Here was a doctor that knew how to put you at ease. That was when I knew I was going to enjoy our conversation.

"Since then I've made my way around the United States."

He did his undergraduate studies at Emory University in Atlanta, went to medical school at Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia and a surgical internship at Stanford. That's getting around the country! But it wasn't over yet. Four years in Boston doing dermatology training, three at Tufts and Boston University's hospitals and one year doing a laser and cosmetic fellowship at Harvard. One more year followed in Birmingham, Alabama doing his cosmetic and skin cancer surgery fellowship.

"Then I came here," he said. "My wife is from the east coast of Florida, Coral Springs. I dragged her all over the United States so it was time to let her pick. I came kicking and screaming. Florida was hurricanes. It was alligators eating dogs. It was just all the funny news stories you get. But I promised her she got to pick."

The Wasserman's were expecting to settle on the east coast, but it just didn't seem to be a good fit, professionally. He almost took a job with the University of Miami but at the last minute they went on a hiring freeze.

"That ended up being very serendipitous," Dr. Wasserman told me. "I ended up getting a job offer in Naples with a big group."

The group was later bought out by a private equity firm and he realized that was not the direction he wanted to go in. He wanted the opportunity to provide a better quality of care so he went out on his own. Skin Wellness Physicians was born.

Daniel Wasserman grew up in a medical household. His father was (still is) a Cardiologist. Daniel understood the demands on personal life that comes with a lot of the different medical specialties. He told me how he eventually ►



◀ Skin Wellness Physicians East Naples offices are located at 8625 Collier Boulevard adjacent to the Naples Lakes Village Center.

see all ages of patients. Sure, he deals with a lot of elderly patients, but he also treats a lot of infants. One of his things is facial birthmarks and Dr. Wasserman stressed that the younger the patient, the better chance they have of removing the entire birthmark.

“The other side of Dermatology is that we have a full spectrum of treatments. Unlike some other specialties, we have surgery, we have toys like lasers, and Botox, and ▶

decided to pursue the path he is now on.

“I remember it was on a holiday, and I was on the trauma unit. I remember being in the hospital and seeing all these doctors there and just thinking how they’re not with their families. I saw how much I was liking the rigor and realized how I could get caught up in that. I don’t want to be them. Don’t get me wrong, we need them, I just didn’t want to be them.”

Dr. Wasserman told me that he knew what he was like. He loved the rigor and was a real workaholic. He gets very vested in his patients and takes a lot of that home with him. He didn’t just want to be a great physician, but he also wanted to be a great family man.

“Dermatology thankfully has a lot of healthy people. There are some people with skin cancers but usually it’s not mortal, except for the melanomas. But that actually is not as often as people think in terms of the death from melanoma,” the Doctor told me. “It’s 75% of skin cancer deaths but people are so good here in Florida about being plugged into a dermatologist. I can say in my eight years of practicing down here I’ve only had two people with metastatic melanoma and they were both from melanomas that they got years before I got here.”

He went on to tell me how Dermatology is one those fields that is akin to Family Practice in the fact that you get to

Now Open in Naples Outlet Center

Olga Gonzalez Florist/Owner  You'll Save Time & Money When You Work with a Local Florist!

5Th Avenue Florist

www.naplesflowershop.net

6050 Collier Blvd. #129 • 239.642.0300

LED

Fans



Fixtures

Bath




Lighting First®

www.LightingFirst.us

Naples 239.775.5100

Bonita Springs 239.949.2544

Fort Myers 239.322.5488



EC13005050



◀ Dr. Wasserman with some of his staff in Skin Wellness Physicians' Goodlette location. Pictured Left to Right: Angie Rodriguez, Vanessa Galdos, Monica Perez, Dr. Wasserman, Shantel Perera, Stacey Yanits and J. J. Jones.

injectables, and knives, and scraping tools, and drill bits. We have everything. And then we have medicines. We use light, so we really have this extremely broad tool chest for providing care to patients. Some are mechanical. Some are, I think, magical," the Doctor went on excitedly. "I always tell people, you really don't give up anything that you liked in medicine except for maybe a stethoscope, when you go into dermatology."

I could tell that this was a man who was truly passionate about his profession and his patients. He went on, "I'm eight years in now. There are patients I've been taking care of for a while. I've seen them age. I've seen them go through tough times, and then get better. I've seen people come in with really awful skin, but with some perseverance because I put them through some tough procedures, we can get a lot of people's skin better than they ever thought possible."

One of the newer exciting things happening at Skin Wellness Physicians is their new partnership with SkinCeuticals. The Doctor expressed his positive feeling about this new partnership. SkinCeuticals

is a company that has products for skin care based on science. They have been published in some of the premiere dermatology journals and research journals in the world.

"By being on a good skin care regimen, especially ones that has a little bit more science behind it, we can get people's skin fit. That doesn't mean turning back time, but it may mean moving through time more slowly," he said.

Skin Wellness Physicians is the flagship for SkinCeuticals in Collier County and I could tell that the Doctor is very excited about it.

Skin Wellness Physicians is here to ensure that you get the care you deserve as a patient and as a person. They want to ensure that their treatments are always in your best interests, not just your skin's. Their plan is to provide the Naples/Marco Island communities with a true dermatology neighborhood health clinic, committed to the patient and to the community.

The final thing that Dr. Wasserman was very passionate about was in our conversation was Mohs surgery. Mohs surgery is a technique developed by the late Dr. Frederick Mohs in Wisconsin. Frustrated by the frequent rate of skin cancer recurrence for many skin cancers removed by standard surgical techniques or other procedures (i.e. radiation, electrodesiccation & curettage, etc), he set out to develop a new way of both removing and processing the tissue in order to provide 100% margin control. Mohs surgery by definition is when the surgeon acts▶

as both the surgeon and the pathologist. If a physician other than the physician who removed your skin cancer is the one to physically look at your surgical specimen under the microscope, then by definition this is not Mohs surgery. This is the only technique where the entire surgical margin is evaluated. It has the highest cure rate, 95-99%, of all skin cancer treatments.

Mohs surgery is reserved for special circumstances due to the increased level of care that comes with this procedure. Certain criteria are used to determine which skin cancers would benefit from this procedure the most. Location (i.e. head, neck, hands/feet, genitals), size of the skin cancer, type of skin cancer, and some extenuating circumstances (including, but not limited to more than 40 years old, immunosuppression, certain genetic syndromes, recurrent skin cancer, skin cancer caused by radiation) are the most common categories for determining the appropriate use of Mohs surgery.

Skin Wellness Physicians employ and only endorse fellowship-trained Mohs surgeons who are recognized by the American College of Mohs Surgery (ACMS). Other organizations, such as the American Society of Mohs Surgery, offer abbreviated courses to certify in Mohs Surgery. The American College of Mohs Surgery requires at least a year long fellowship that is strictly dedicated



▲ The SkinCeuticals display in the lobby of the Goodlette Road location.

to the training of Mohs Surgery and the expertise in reconstruction necessary to repair the surgical defect left behind following the removal of the skin cancer. A large number of complex cases during the fellowship are required to receive certification at the end of the fellowship and membership into the American College of Mohs Surgery. All clinical trials performed exemplifying the superior cure rates of Mohs Surgery (95-99%) for skin cancer above all

other skin cancer treatments, were done exclusively by fellowship-trained Mohs surgeons. I would like to thank Dr. Wasserman for taking the time from his busy schedule to talk with me and hopefully to provide some good information to you, our readers.

Dr. Wasserman and his entire staff were friendly and welcoming and I truly enjoyed my little sit down with this passionate young doctor. ■

greenery WIZARD

Gracious Outdoor Spaces **Concierge Gardening**

Garden Design Inspired by You
Conjured for You

Hand Pruning, Weeding,
Perennial Care, Flower Pots

greenerywizard.com 239.331.2531