

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Prof Ashraf Badawi

We were delighted to speak with **Professor Ashraf Badawi** about his distinguished career in dermatology.


**ONLINE
EXCLUSIVE**

You are internationally recognised in the field of dermatology – can you tell us a little bit about your background?

I come from a scientific family in Egypt; my grandfather, my father and my mother were university professors at the Faculty of Agriculture, Cairo University. I took another path as I decided to study medicine and graduated in 1992 from the Faculty of Medicine at Cairo University. I then decided to go into dermatology, obtaining a master's degree in dermatology and venerology in 1997 after which I obtained a diploma degree in general surgery.

At that time, laser science was starting to shine so I decided to dive deeper into it by getting a diploma in laser applications in biology and medicine in 1998. At the same time, I started to work at the National Institute of Laser Enhanced Sciences (NILES) at Cairo University. I loved that field so much I decided to obtain a PhD degree which I finished in 2007.

During those years I had the privilege of participating in hundreds of educational activities in the field of aesthetic dermatology all over the world and I learned that teaching is the best way to learn.

During my scientific path I was honoured by being elected the president of two European scientific societies, the European Society for Cosmetic and Aesthetic Dermatology (ESCAD) and the European Society for Lasers and Energy Based Devices (ESLD).

You have spent time training and working in both Canada and Egypt; are there many differences in the practice of dermatology between the two countries?

There are major differences in practising between the countries; in Egypt the patient flow is very high and there is a great mix of classic dermatological cases and cosmetic dermatology cases. In Canada, as I worked in private practice, almost all the cases were of an aesthetic nature. Patient demands and expectations are very different too. It is really important to understand the psychology of your patient and the nature of the problems they present with to be able to use the right tool to tackle the problem and achieve patient satisfaction.

What has been the best piece of advice that you have received in your career and what advice would you offer to those following in your footsteps?

My Dad was always telling me: "You have to work hard until you are confident that what you do, no one in the world can do better and then you start to compete with yourself." I did that and it works well!

I'd like to advise my junior colleagues that if they want to learn something well, read about it and try to teach what you have learned to someone else. There is no better way to learn about something.



Your field is evolving all the time; what do you think have been the most exciting developments in recent years?

That is very true, the field is evolving, however there is a lot of marketing too. Scientific research and technologies based on true science are much less than what is being marketed. With the dynamic life we are all living, people and practitioners are looking for safe and effective technologies which are associated with minimal discomfort and downtime.

Microneedling radiofrequency as well as non-ablative rejuvenation with laser have been among my most commonly used techniques during the past few years with great success.

As a clinician well known for presenting at international meetings, do you see this as a vital part of your work?

As I mentioned earlier, I learn a lot from every educational activity I participate in, so yes, it is a very important and rewarding part of my work. I have learned a lot through teaching and sharing what I know with thousands of colleagues from all over the world.

You were one of the Scientific Directors for the SEASON Aesthetic Conference which took place in London in June; can you tell us a bit more about the event?

I know that the organisers of SEASON put great effort and time into gathering the best speakers in the field to share their knowledge and expertise sincerely with colleagues, and it was certainly an outstanding event.

The primary objectives of SEASON are to promote evidence-based medicine and scientific excellence. We also strive to address the increasing diversity of our patient populations with respect to ethnicity, gender, culture and age, and how this diversity impacts treatment planning and outcomes.

In reflecting these objectives, SEASON had some unique features with respect to its logistics, format and agenda. There were hands-on sessions offering practical, small-group training and preceptorship in essential areas, including cadaver dissection and facial anatomy, imaging and augmented reality for procedural safety, use of cannulas, advanced facial analysis, and treatment planning. The SEASON Journal Club for interactive review and analysis of key publications and research, and what they really mean for everyday aesthetic practice was also extremely useful. A non-commercialised new technologies session for unbiased, evidence-based discussion of innovations that will shape the future of aesthetic medicine was a refreshing change from some other conferences.

The conference directors and invited faculty were all actively engaged in academic teaching and most have academic

appointments at universities, teaching hospitals or plastic surgery and dermatology academies. The faculty was specifically selected for their commitment to evidence-based medicine, non-promotional and fair-balanced education, and clinical integrity. Industry participation at SEASON was by invitation only, and limited to companies and laboratories that are dedicated to procedural safety, evidence-based education, and scientific research. Companies and laboratories serve as conference partners rather than sponsors, by providing educational grants to help defray conference expenses.

SEASON was the third congress of the Global Aesthetics Alliance (GAA), a not-for-profit scientific exchange that has the mission of advancing procedural safety and outcomes in aesthetic medicine, identifying unmet needs in research and development, and fostering responsible media reporting in aesthetics. Now we are preparing for the SEASON Online Conference which will launch soon and include new content as well as recordings from the live conference. Next year, we will have editions of SEASON 2023 live in London (June) and Dubai (November).

The GAA was established in response to requests from educators, researchers and professional societies in dermatology and plastic surgery for non-commercialised, peer-to-peer informational exchange predicated on quality and integrity; and also due to mounting concern at some media depictions of aesthetic medicine and the aesthetics industry.

Many thanks to Prof Badawi for his time.