

Mark V. Sofonio, M.D., F.A.C.S.

A Coachella Valley native leads a 21st century revolution in nonsurgical skin treatments — from permanently melting fat with the wave of a wand to a noninvasive ultrasound face-lift.

BY MATT LINK

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TAYLOR SHERRILL & ASSOCIATES

■ Curing Cancer on Your Lunch Break

In 2013, *The Desert Sun* newspaper featured an interview with Cecilia Ardella, a woman being treated for skin cancer on her face.

What made her story newsworthy? Ardella simply popped into the Skin Cancer Institute in Rancho Mirage during her lunch break for a nonsurgical treatment that lasted a mere 45 seconds.

“You don’t feel anything, the only thing I hear is the machine,” Ardella told the newspaper. “You just hear the motor running, there’s no feeling whatsoever.”

Ardella returned to work with her non-melanoma cancerous lesion completely — and painlessly — eradicated. Better yet, she experienced no scarring, unlike the surgeries for other lesions that she had endured in the past.

Dr. Mark V. Sofonio, a board-certified cosmetic surgeon, treated Ardella’s lesion with a new machine called the SRT-100. “It uses a low-energy, highly concentrated radiotherapy that goes no deeper than the thickness of the skin — around half a centimeter,” Dr. Sofonio explains. “This is similar to what you would get if you had a chest X-ray. It’s just more of it and more powerful, and it’s pinpointed and directed. The SRT-100 is safe and painless and does not puncture the skin — meaning no surgical scars. And it takes less than a minute per treatment.”

Dr. Sofonio founded the skin Cancer Institute in 2012. It remains the only medical facility in the Coachella Valley to offer the popular SRT treatments for non-melanoma skin cancers — with a cure rate approaching 95 percent. Since 2013, Dr. Sofonio has successfully treated more than 300 patients with SRT-100.

A Modern Revolution in Nonsurgical Face-lifts

While Dr. Sofonio continues to perform needed surgical procedures, his state-of-the-art practice has invested more than half a million dollars in new nonsurgical technologies that have revolutionized the field of cosmetic surgery. By their very noninvasive nature, these science fiction-like modalities not only succeed with far better results than procedures of the past, but also create a painless patient experience with little to no recovery time.

“When I was studying at medical school, I never dreamed there would be a day when I would place sound waves on a patient’s face and have it tighten the tissue under the skin,” Dr. Sofonio says. “I also never would have expected to ever put a wand on someone’s stomach and have it melt fat.”

A revolutionary new FDA-approved treatment called Ultherapy can take the place of old-school face-lifts and tucks in many instances. Nonsurgical and noninvasive, Ultherapy uses safe and time-tested ultrasound energy to create heat and stimulate the growth of fresh new collagen without hurting tissue or nerves.

With Ultherapy, skin tightens and gradually lifts to a more youthful shape — all without surgery. Patients are thrilled by the results of the hour-long treatments, as well as the lack of downtime or side effects.

“When Ultherapy first came out, people were skeptical — including me,” Dr. Sofonio reveals. “But it simply uses intensified sound waves to create heat under the skin, without hurting the skin itself. We’ve done nearly 900 Ultherapy treatments, and we’re now one of the busiest Ultherapy practitioners in Southern California.”



Fat Cells Removed with the Wave of a Wand

Vanquish is a new fat removal technology that recently secured FDA approval. With the use of focused radio frequencies Vanquish safely and painlessly heats and destroys fat cells without harming the skin or surrounding muscle. This nonsurgical 30-minute procedure has minimal to no side effects with no downtime or recovery — unlike invasive procedures like liposuction or tummy tuck. With just half a dozen or so treatments over the course of a month, Vanquish can permanently remove fat from problem areas.

“Vanquish devices only came on the market recently, and we are the only office in the desert offering this procedure,” Dr. Sofonio says. “It’s like a wand you hold about an inch away from the skin that produces concentrated heat at about 114 degrees —



From left to right: Shirley Wolfe, Doug Ortiz, Elizabeth Hagger, Jon Poling, Candance Lee, Kyle James, Mary Jane Dante, Dr. Mark Sofonio, (front - Caroline Sofonio) Liza Figueroa, Patricia Owens, Sheila Celaya, Becky Gardner, Kelly Wheeler, Jacque Vaccaro, Cindy McElwian

not too far above a summer temperature for those of us who live in the desert but focused to literally melt and kill fat cells.”

A Native Desert Son, a Top-Ranked Surgeon

Dr. Mark Sofonio is well-versed in the effects of the sun, having grown up under the Coachella Valley’s incessantly brilliant natural light. Graduating from UCLA School of medicine with magna cum laude, Dr. Sofonio lectured extensively and was widely published. He soon became recognized as one of the top plastic surgeons in the country.

Returning to his native desert, Dr. Sofonio spent nearly a decade as Section Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at the Eisenhower Medical Center in Rancho Mirage. He has been consistently ranked as one of the top doctors in the Coachella Valley for more than a decade by the nationally

recognized peer-reviewed physician rankings conducted by Castle Connolly Medical Ltd.

“I found plastic surgery allowed me something general surgery didn’t – to be a perfectionist, and that’s something I truly enjoy,” Dr. Sofonio states.

“I’ve now been practicing for nearly 20 years, and I’ve learned over time to ask patients questions and to let them tell you about their concerns and their needs. It’s amazing how much both the doctor and the patient learn when we take the time to do that.”

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TOP DOCTOR

DR. SOFONIO HAS BEEN A FEATURED TOP DOCTOR FOR 13 YEARS IN A ROW



2005 2006



2007 2008



2009 2010



2011 2012



2013 2014



2015 2016



2017