

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

GROUNDBREAKING NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN SKIN CANCER TREATMENTS. FAT REMOVAL.

AND FACELIFTS — ALL WITHOUT SURGERY **BY MATT LINK • PHOTOGRAPHY BY TAYLOR SHERRILL**



From left to right: Jon Poling, Heather White, Shari Maciej, Jacque Vaccaro, Lora Gallo, Mary Jane Dantis, Kyle James, Dr. Mark Sofonio, Mrs. Caroline Sofonio, Kelly Wheeler, Becky Gardner, Sheila Celaya, Candance Lee, Liza Figueroa, Patti Owens, John Graciano, Not in Photo - Carole Adams, Alan Adams, Daniel Ortiz, Cindy McElwain, and Allyson Reeves

"I AM TRULY GRATEFUL FOR THE CARE and concern that Dr. Sofonio has had for me. He and all the staff are deeply caring and professional in supporting each patient's highest well-being. I have had scar revision treatments that, after 30 years of trying, really worked. I have done Ultherapy on my face and neck, and am so incredibly impressed with results after only two months. Now I am doing Vanquish, and I believe it, too, will work as the doctor promised. If you want top care and results, go to Dr. Sofonio."

That quote is not by a paid actor in a TV commercial. It's an actual testimonial from a real patient of Dr. Mark V. Sofonio, board-certified plastic surgeon. Other patients extol Dr. Sofonio's practice at the Eisenhower Medical Center Campus as "unparalleled," "exceptional," "compassionate," "positive," "superb," and simply "the best."

It's no wonder Dr. Sofonio is consistently named one of the top doctors in the Coachella Valley year after year. Widely published and having lectured extensively, Dr. Sofonio is recognized as one of the top plastic surgeons in the country.

"I found plastic surgery allowed me something general surgery didn't — to be a perfectionist, and that's something I truly enjoy," states Dr. Sofonio, who was raised in the desert before graduating from UCLA Medical School with magna cum laude honors.

"I also like plastic surgery because it has an artistic side. I really enjoy that intellectual challenge. And the emotional challenge I get with every case can be very fulfilling."

A VAST NEW WORLD OF NONSURGERY

Beyond dramatically improving the quality of life of his patients, Dr. Sofonio also sees his

role as an educator about the new technological revolutions in cosmetic surgery.

"When I was studying in 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," says Dr. Sofonio. "I also never would have expected to put a wand on someone's stomach and have it melt fat."

Dr. Sofonio notes that there really haven't been many new major surgery procedures developed since the late 1990s. "But over the last 15 years, vast, new, groundbreaking technologies have created completely new kinds of treatments — all noninvasive and nonoperative."

"Our practice has invested over half a million dollars in some of these new innovative technologies, and I wouldn't have done that if I didn't think they would work to the benefit of our patients."

Dr. Sofonio is the first physician in the Coachella Valley to offer a superficial radiotherapy treatment for both basal and squamous cell carcinoma.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO TREAT AND DETECT SKIN CANCERS

Sun exposure and skin cancer are concerns desert dwellers are only too familiar with, especially Baby Boomers who in their youth had never heard of sunblock.

"Every eight seconds a person turns 60 in the U.S. — and half of those will get skin cancer," cites Dr. Sofonio. "Skin cancers are growing in numbers faster than all other cancers combined."

In the past, surgeons physically cut out skin cancers, creating scars and holes in the skin. But nonsurgical treatments have recently evolved, and Dr. Sofonio is the first physician in the Coachella Valley to offer a superficial radiotherapy treatment for both basal and squamous cell carcinoma.

"The SRT-100 is a low-energy radiotherapy that goes no deeper than the thickness of the skin," says Dr. Sofonio. "It's safe and painless and does not puncture the skin — meaning no scars or recovery downtime. It takes just 45 seconds per treatment, and it has cure rates approaching 95 percent."

For melanoma, the most fatal of all skin cancers, Dr. Sofonio is ahead of the curve with a new noninvasive imaging technology called MelaFind. By scanning deep below the skin's surface, MelaFind detects the early stages of cancerous lesions with a 98 percent accuracy rate.

"This has completely changed how melanoma is diagnosed," states Dr. Sofonio. "You no longer have to cut out anything suspicious or biopsy it — you can just take photographs. I believe this technology would have probably saved many skin cancer victims in the past."

LIKE A MAGIC WAND, VANQUISH MELTS AWAY FAT

Vanquish is a new fat removal technology that passed the first stages of FDA approval last year. With the use of focused radio frequency waves, Vanquish safely heats fat cells without harming the skin or surrounding muscle. This painless, nonsurgical, 30-minute procedure has minimal side effects — unlike invasive procedures like liposuction or gastric bypass surgery.

"Vanquish devices only came on the market in October 2013, and we are the only office in the desert offering this procedure," says Dr. Sofonio. "It's like a wand you hold about an inch away from the skin that produces concentrated heat at about 115 degrees — a familiar temperature for those of us who live in the desert, but focused to literally melt and kill fat cells. Vanquish is really amazing; I sometimes can't believe it myself. One of the women in our office lost 5 inches with just four once-a-week treatments."

SOUND WAVES AND LIGHT ENERGY FOR FACELIFTS AND SKIN TREATMENTS

Another revolutionary nonsurgical and noninvasive procedure Dr. Sofonio now offers is Ultherapy. Utilizing safe and time-tested ultrasound energy, FDA-approved Ultherapy stimulates the growth of fresh new collagen to tighten and gradually lift skin to a more youthful shape.

"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. I've now done more than 600 of these treatments, and we are now the busiest Ultherapy practitioners in Southern California. Patients are thrilled by the results, as well as the lack of side effects."

For surface skin issues — such as warts, scars, wrinkles, and birthmarks — Dr. Sofonio has another space-age tool in his arsenal: a fractionated CO2 laser.

"It isn't a run-of-the-mill laser surgical tool. A fractionated CO2 laser uses very short pulses (ultrapulses) of light energy to vaporize the upper layers of the skin and resurface them," describes Dr. Sofonio. "The energy emitted is controlled to precisely remove the skin with minimal damage, and it heals very fast while stimulating collagen production for tightening of the skin."

A REAL HUMAN BEHIND THE MACHINES

But it's not only new technologies that have made Mark Sofonio one of the leaders in his field. His human approach is what patients consistently praise him for, in addition to the phenomenal results.

"The most important thing is to listen to the patients," Dr. Sofonio divulges with a smile. "For some reason, in medical school, I don't know if we got that. 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."

Dr. Sofonio has been a featured Top Doctor in *Palm Springs Life* magazine for 11 years in a row.

