

# Next Generation of Pellevé™ Wrinkle Reduction Technology to Debut at The Aesthetic Meeting 2011 in Boston



Four prominent physicians discuss using this new energy-based system.



By Wendy Lewis

**R**adiofrequency (RF) technology has come a long way since its first introduction to aesthetic medicine, and it is now considered a mainstay in cosmetic practices.

The Pellevé™ Wrinkle Reduction System with GlideSafe™ technology is the latest innovation in noninvasive, virtually pain-free, nonablative facial skin tightening. The technology utilizes advanced RF to induce collagen contraction and synthesis without damaging the epidermis for consistent and predictable outcomes.

Ellman launched the new family of Pellevé GlideSafe handpieces that provide continuous energy flow, rather than pulsed. GlideSafe features an innovative sensor that stops the energy flow when the device senses loss of contact with the skin, thus increasing patient comfort. *PSP* asked four key aesthetic medicine luminaries to discuss their personal experiences with Pellevé and the new GlideSafe handpieces.



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 Plastic Surgeon  
 New York, NY



**Vivian W. Bucay, MD**  
 Dermatologist  
 San Antonio, TX



**Ronald L. Moy, MD**  
 Dermatologist  
 Los Angeles, CA



**Bradley Lemke, MD, FACS**  
 Oculoplastic Surgeon  
 Madison, WI



PHOTOS COURTESY OF STEVEN DAVAN, MD, FACS

A female patient pretreatment (left) and 60 days after second treatment.

**PSP: How has the category of skin-tightening treatments evolved over recent years to be an integral component of a cosmetic practice offering?**

**Ronald L. Moy, MD:** Noninvasive skin tightening has evolved to be an integral component of our cosmetic practice since it is accepted that it works and prevents further sagging and loosening. Patients and physicians understand it is intended to give modest tightening. We often combine Pellevé with fractional laser resurfacing.

**Vivian W. Bucay, MD:** Patients understand that wrinkle reduction via botulinum toxin Type A treatments, volume replacement via fillers, and biostimulators may not be enough to achieve a more youthful appearance. They often express a wish for firmer, tighter skin, which is where skin-tightening devices come in.

Although there is no question that tissue tightening can be achieved by more aggressive laser resurfacing treatments, patients cannot afford the downtime. Previous devices that promised to deliver skin tightening often fell short, either because of lack of efficacy or because the treatments were too painful and/or expensive to justify a subtle improvement.

I was never satisfied with tissue-tightening devices until Flor Mayoral, MD, introduced me to Pellevé. The reasonable investment for the physician and for the patient was certainly attractive, but it was the visible results that convinced me. Skin tightening is an integral part of my cosmetic practice, and the evolution of versatile, lighter-weight, portable devices that require little investment in consumables but still deliver natural, visible

results with less risk will ensure the increasing popularity and demand for this type of procedure.

**Bradley Lemke, MD, FACS:** Before Pellevé, we had been using an IPL mostly for pigmentation and photofacials, and medium-depth TCA peels, but we couldn't go too deep because patients didn't want prolonged erythema.

When I brought Pellevé into the practice, my aestheticians and nurses were skeptical initially about a new technology. They are all sold on it now, they have had it done themselves, and now they are very confident in offering the procedure to their patients. They see results that are achievable and how satisfied their patients are. Adding Pellevé skin tightening has given our cosmetic skin care practice a new dimension.

**Z. Paul Lorenc, MD, FACS:** Skin tightening has become a necessary and fundamental component of a cosmetic practice, both postoperatively to enhance the surgical results we achieve, as well as preoperatively to delay possible surgical intervention.

The initial treatment protocol using a single modality, CO<sub>2</sub> laser resurfacing, has evolved into a multienergy-based one. It encompasses the use of infrared light, ultrasound, Erbium, CO<sub>2</sub>, and RF energies. Patients are seeking out less invasive treatments without downtime and at a price they can afford, which is where skin tightening with the Pellevé technology fills an important role.

**PSP: Where does Pellevé fit into your practice?**

**Moy:** Pellevé is for patients who do not want surgery but complain

of skin loosening. They have to know that the skin tightening results are less than those achieved with surgery. The Pellevé tightening does prevent further skin loosening, so younger patients will consider it as a preventative treatment.

**Bucay:** Pellevé is a natural fit for my practice because it delivers visible skin tightening, which is something that cannot be accomplished with neuromodulators or fillers. It's a great option for patients who are looking for a "little lift" and softening of wrinkles and fine lines. Treatments can be performed in 30 to 60 minutes, with the advantage of no downtime and little, if any, discomfort.

Treatments can be done spontaneously because there is no pretreatment protocol, and patients do not have to stop topical cosmetic treatments (such as tretinoin and alpha-hydroxy acids) or medications that are anticoagulants.

Pellevé can also complement injectable procedures. For example, it can improve fine lines and upper eyelid folds that may not respond to botulinum toxin Type A injections. And it can be a useful adjunct for patients who have forehead lines with redundant eyelid skin, which limits their treatment with botulinum toxin type A due to the risk of causing ptosis.

**Lemke:** We started offering Pellevé in April 2010, so we have a year's experience already—and it is picking up momentum. I particularly like the versatility of Pellevé and the flexible price point. My typical patients are soccer moms, working women, or early retirees, as well as younger patients who want to begin skin care for preventative reasons.

You have to charge what the mar-

ket will bear. We can set a reasonable price range because my staff does the treatment and we are doing an increasing number of procedures. When patients come back for another Pellevé, they often buy skin care products and/or ask about other procedures such as Botox or fillers. We often try to make it advantageous if patients have a few procedures done.

My staff takes time in performing the treatment and strives for a spa-like experience. They apply cool compresses, there is soft music playing in the room, so it is very relaxing. We take our time and don't rush to get patients in and out.

Pellevé is an affordable, pleasurable treatment that keeps cosmetic patients coming back into our office.

**Lorenc:** I have seen that Pellevé has enhanced my surgical practice by attracting new nonsurgical patients. In the past, I would have had little to offer these patients who did not want surgery or injectables, but [also] wanted to see a visible improvement in skin tone and texture without downtime or discomfort. We have found that many of these patients will eventually undergo a surgical procedure.

Skin tightening with Pellevé maintains a steady flow of patients, exposing them to all the other procedures offered in the practice. I have also used Pellevé to enhance postsurgical results, such as residual skin laxity after a facelift. Patients actually like this treatment, which I have not found to be the case with some other devices.

**PSP: What facial treatment areas have you found to be the most effective, and why?**

**Moy:** The periorbital areas seem to be most effectively treated with Pellevé, although it also treats fine lines well, and lessens deeper lines in areas of the cheek and around the mouth. This is possibly due to the thin nature of the periorbital skin and the effective collagen remodeling in other areas.

**Bucay:** I also find that the periorbital region responds very nicely, with good improvement in crow's feet and fine lines under the eyes. More importantly, Pellevé treatments can produce a noticeable tightening of loose periorbital skin. Tissue tightening and collagen remodeling that result from deep dermal heating without compromising the epidermis is readily visible in areas where the skin is naturally thinner.

**Lemke:** My patients usually want to have their whole face done in one session. The most significant areas of improvement in terms of visible reduction of wrinkles are in areas of thinner skin, such as around the eyes. If you just want to do a periocular treatment, you will have the best chance of being able to show a noticeable effect that will be visible in photos.

After we treat the whole face and forehead, the skin feels firm, smooth, and patients generally have a post-treatment glow that they report lasts about 5 to 7 days. Then the long-term creation of collagen begins and becomes evident over the next 6 to 8 weeks. I personally have had three



Pellevé Wrinkle Reduction System

treatments, and I look forward to my next one. My personal experience was that I saw a change in my jowls a month later. I had forgotten about it, but noticed the improvement in the mirror when I was shaving.

**Lorenc:** I agree that the periorbital area is a home run. We also see nice improvement for perioral rhytides, in particular for the upper lip or smoker's lines.

**PSP: What are some of the advantages you feel that the new GlideSafe offers to you and your patients?**

**Moy:** GlideSafe is a handpiece that includes a sensor that will cut the RF energy flow when the electrode senses loss of contact with the skin—virtually eliminating the risk of discomfort for the patient.

**Bucay:** The 20-mm GlideSafe offers the advantage of being able to treat larger areas in a shorter amount of time. GlideSafe also has a built-in sensor that will stop energy flow if contact with the skin is interrupted or insufficient.

Because Pellevé treatments are based on radiofrequency, "shocking" could result from loss of contact with

the skin when energy is still flowing from the tip of the older device. This new sensor eliminates the risk, which means greater patient comfort.

GlideSafe is what is called a fixed-life reusable, meaning that it combines features of a disposable and reusable handpiece. There are 3 hours of treatment time, but the time is utilized only while the device is in contact with the skin delivering RF energy. This means that a single handpiece can be used for multiple patient treatments and that multiple-size handpieces can be used for each patient to customize the treatment for that patient.

**Lemke:** GlideSafe makes the treatment more comfortable for the patient. The real advantage of this device is that there is no sparking as the tip is applied or removed from the skin while the power is inadvertently engaged. Having a larger 20-mm spot size will also make the treatment time go faster, especially when treating larger areas. Ergonomically, the larger handpiece is more comfortable for the treating hand.

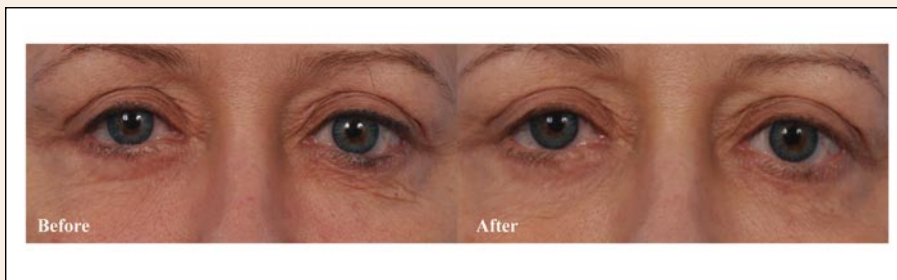
**Lorenc:** Having now used all four sizes of the GlideSafe, I can state without hesitation that the possibility of an inadvertent "zap" with the previous device has been eliminated. With its automatic shut-off when not engaged, the newly developed handpiece is truly a significant advance in the technology. The increased surface area of the new 20-mm handpiece also makes the treatment much quicker and more efficient, which benefits both the physician and the patient.

**PSP: What pearls can you give on how to achieve optimal results with the Pellevé platform?**

**Moy:** The main objective in administering Pellevé is to keep the temperature at or above 40 degrees Celsius. To ensure this, we will always try to keep the temperature at least 42 to 43 degrees Celsius to accommodate for inherent errors in thermometer calibration.

Another technique that is helpful is to compartmentalize the treatment areas and to reach the optimal temperature before moving on to the next treatment area. Once this is achieved, we will measure the previously treated area and bring that area up to 42 to 43 degrees again. We feel that the patient should receive five or more passes for each treatment area.

**Bucay:** I recommend starting with lower settings and gradually increasing them in order to achieve deep dermal heating for a longer period of



PHOTOS COURTESY OF STEVEN DAYAN, MD, FACS

A female patient pretreatment (left) and 60 days after a single treatment.

time. I like to perform three "passes" in each area before going on to the next region. Initial settings that are too high will more likely produce patient discomfort that leads to suboptimal results.

I encourage patients to have a series of three treatments, approximately 3 to 4 weeks apart. I explain that there will be some instant gratification but that collagen remodeling takes 90 days, meaning that results will appear gradually. Gradual results are becoming an increasingly important trend with patients as they often equate a gradual improvement with a longer-lasting and more natural-appearing result.

**Lemke:** In my offices, we use a 10-mm and a 15-mm handpiece. Purchasing the larger 15-mm probe was definitely a good decision, as the treatment time is reduced.

The machine comes with an activating foot pedal, and the handpieces also have finger-activated buttons. My staff was initially resistant to the notion of using the foot pedal, but I insisted that they use it to avoid repetitive stress injuries to the treating hand. Now they really prefer using the foot pedal.

**Lorenc:** I completely agree with the concept of multiple sessions. Three treatments are optimal, although two may be adequate depending on the patient's age, degree of laxity, or depth of wrinkling and expectations. We have had some patients come back for more treatments in additional areas.

I also recommend liberal use of gel during the treatment, to enhance comfort and the use of cutaneous temperature measurement as a guide to maximize efficacy. Pellevé is a very straightforward system to use, and I have found results to be predictable and reproducible.

**PSP: How did the surgical versatility of the S5 generator impact your decision to add Pellevé to your practice?**

**Moy:** Our Pellevé experience was quite the opposite. We initially used Pellevé for skin tightening, but found benefits of

the S5 generator during lower blepharoplasties. To be able to incise precisely and coagulate simultaneously is a great advantage that the S5 has over other modalities for both skin-tightening and surgical devices.

**Bucay:** The versatility of the system allows me to perform Pellevé treatments for wrinkle reduction and skin tightening with the traditional 10-mm and 15-mm probes, so I can treat small areas. With the introduction of the GlideSafe 20-mm handpiece, I can treat larger areas more quickly and with better patient comfort.

There are a variety of electrodes and accessories available, so I can also use the system for common office-based procedures, such as sebaceous keratoses, skin tags, warts, lesions of sebaceous hyperplasia, and dermatosis papulosa nigra. It is excellent for telangiectasias and cherry angiomas.

Healing is very quick because there is little heating of surrounding tissue, which minimizes tissue damage.

**Lemke:** I have been watching the development of the Pellevé system for the past 6 to 8 years. When Pellevé was FDA cleared and the independent study showed an 85% incidence of improvement in skin tightening and texture 6 months after one treatment, I decided to upgrade to the S5 generator to add Pellevé to my practice.

I had purchased three of the Ellman Surgitron RF devices 11 years ago for surgical procedures; one is in my office, and two are in surgery centers.

**Lorenc:** I can certainly see where this would be a big advantage in a dermatology practice where you are treating skin lesions. I refer patients who present with the conditions Vivian described to my dermatologic colleagues. ■

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**Ronald L. Moy, MD**, has practiced cosmetic and skin surgery and facial plastic surgery for over 25 years in Los Angeles, and is president of the American Academy of Dermatology.



**Bradley Lemke, MD, FACS**, is an oculoplastic surgeon based in Madison, Wis, and a past president of the American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery.

**To learn more about the Pellevé™ Wrinkle Reduction System, visit [Pellevé.com](http://Pellevé.com)**