



Apex Skin and Dr. Jorge Garcia-Zuazaga Highlight Veterans' Elevated Skin-Health Risks

Cleveland, OH – (October 24, 2025) Military veterans face unique health challenges, and one of the most overlooked is their heightened risk of skin cancer. Apex Skin, led by founder and veteran Dr. Jorge Garcia-Zuazaga, is working to change that through expanded access to care and special outreach programs designed specifically for veterans.

"Skin cancer isn't just a medical issue — for me, it's a personal mission. During deployments, we spend countless hours exposed to harsh sun, hot tarmac, often without adequate protection. That constant exposure adds up, and years later, it can come back in the form of skin cancer — something too many of us don't see coming until it's too late," said Dr. Garcia.

"As a veteran, I've walked the same paths, stood under the same unforgiving sun, and worn the same uniform. The military community is my family — my brothers and sisters — and I feel a deep responsibility to give back. That's why I'm passionate about raising awareness and making sure every veteran knows they have options, support, and access to care. Early detection saves lives. We stood together then — and I'm here to stand with you now."

A Growing and Silent Risk

Studies show that veterans are far more likely to suffer from skin cancer and other dermatologic conditions compared to civilians:

- 9% of veterans self-reported a history of skin cancer, compared with only 2.9% of nonveterans (JAMA Dermatology)
- Veterans had 1.72 times greater odds for any skin cancer and 2.27 times greater odds for melanoma than nonveterans (JAMA Dermatology)
- Veterans were 18% more likely to be diagnosed in stage 3 and 13% more likely in stage 4 melanoma compared to civilians (Disabled American Veterans Report)
- Veterans also show higher rates of chronic skin conditions. For example, 4.5% of veterans had psoriasis compared to 2.9% of nonveterans, and after adjustment, veterans had 61% higher odds of a psoriasis diagnosis (JAMA Dermatology)

The reasons are multifactorial: prolonged sun exposure during service, limited protective measures in deployment environments, and reduced access to dermatologic care after discharge.

From Service to Skin Science

Dr. Jorge Garcia-Zuazaga, MD, MBA, FAAD, FACMS, is more than Apex Skin's founding physician. He is also a veteran who served as a flight surgeon for a Marine F-18 squadron. His unique perspective as both a physician and a veteran allows him to understand the culture, the challenges, and the urgent need for trusted care.

Because of this, Dr. Garcia has made it his mission to weave service into every aspect of medicine. Under his leadership, **Apex Skin** is redefining access to exceptional dermatologic care by offering:

- **Comprehensive full-body skin screenings** available at all 15 Apex Skin locations, with same-day appointments, easy self-scheduling, and minimal wait times — ensuring patients can receive expert care when they need it most.
- **SPOTcheck appointments**, which guarantee that any suspicious lesion is evaluated by a qualified provider within 24 hours, offering patients peace of mind through rapid access to diagnosis.
- **An expert team of board-certified Mohs surgeons**, providing advanced skin cancer treatment with unmatched experience and outcomes — including more than **100,000 skin cancers successfully cured** under Apex Skin's care.

To combine his two passions of dermatology and military service, he created The Purple Heart Project, which offers free scar revisions to Veterans injured in active duty. He understands that this can help heal more than just the skin and can go a long way to improving confidence and happiness for deserving Veterans.

Apex Skin is urging veterans and their families to prioritize routine screenings and early detection. The practice also invites community leaders, policymakers, and veteran organizations to partner in spreading awareness.

For interviews, veteran referrals, or more information about the Purple Heart Project, please contact Johanna Maas at jmaas@apexskin.com.

About Apex Skin

Apex Skin was founded by Dr. Jorge Garcia-Zuazaga to offer rapid access to excellent dermatological care. Apex Skin is now the premier physician-owned and locally managed dermatology practice in Northeast Ohio, specializing in medical, surgical, and aesthetic dermatology. With 15 locations throughout Northeast Ohio, same-day appointments, short wait times, and a staff that prioritizes patient experience, Apex Skin is the best option for any skincare needs.

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