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| art   |  | | --- | | JAMM AQUINO / [JAQUINO@STARBULLETIN.COM](mailto:JAQUINO@STARBULLETIN.COM?subject=http://archives.starbulletin.com/2007/07/30/) Drs. Bradley Sakaguchi and Lori Kelsey started ZenSpa & Medical Offices to offer patients medical care and spa services in a combined, calming environment. | |

**Everything Zen**

**A new doctor's office offers spa treatments -- and medicine, too**

By Helen Altonn / [haltonn@starbulletin.com](mailto:haltonn@starbulletin.com?subject=http://archives.starbulletin.com/2007/07/30/)

When Dr. Brad Sakaguchi's patients show up for a Pap smear or prenatal exam, they often stay for a facial, laser, Botox or other treatments.

"I had one patient who was here four hours this week for a doctor's appointment, massage and facial," he said, noting this allowed him to spend more time with her between appointments.

This is the kind of "revolutionary" doctoring Sakaguchi envisioned when he and his wife, Dr. Lori Kelsey, opened ZenSpa & Medical Offices in Restaurant Row last month.

Peaceful colors, soft music, trickling water and the fragrance of aromatherapy greet patients when they enter Suite 230 in 7 Waterfront Plaza.

Construction began in March, and the couple did much of the work themselves to create a resort spa feeling. They followed a feng shui design as closely as possible to relieve stress, Sakaguchi said.

"What's nice is you don't feel like you're stepping into a doctor's office," said ZenSpa client Keri Brown, 30, who finished her residency as an OB/GYN doctor in June and hopes to have a similar practice someday. "It's a brilliant idea."

Sakaguchi, 43, and Kelsey, 41, received military scholarships at different medical schools, met as interns at the former Fitzsimons Army Medical Center in Denver and were Army doctors in Korea. They married after returning here in 1997.

Sakaguchi was working as a general surgeon at Tripler Army Medical Center but said he wanted to do something more patient-focused. He decided obstetrics/gynecology was the answer and went to the University of Hawaii for an OB/GYN residency. People thought he was crazy, he said, laughing.

Kelsey completed military service at Schofield Barracks and went to UH for an internal medicine residency. She worked at Tripler and Schofield, then went to the Veterans Administration Hospital, where she still works part time. She trained and became certified as an aesthetician for their new business.

Both as a woman and a physician, she said, she thought it was a great idea when her husband proposed establishing a medical practice in a relaxing spa environment.

The two went to seminars and places around the world to see what others were doing in health care, and they talked to hundreds of women. "They wanted an environment that was peaceful, safe and comfortable," Sakaguchi said.

"The typical doctor's office -- nothing about it says health to me. I know many doctors who provide great medicine, but patients say that's not enough. ... There's a fundamental disconnect between what patients want and how we deliver medicine that is not taught in medical school."

ZenSpa's medical services range from obstetrics and prenatal care, advanced laparoscopy, menopause and hormone replacement to laser hair removal, facial rejuvenation and skin tightening, microdermabrasion, Botox and Restalyn and other treatments.

The facility includes a surgical procedure room and massage, laser and facial rooms. An array of organic products, soaps, candles, books and special teas is available.

About 40 percent of medical patients also arrange for a spa treatment, said spa manager Dara Chun. "It's like a one-stop shop for women." Men also get hair removals or facials, making up about 20 percent of clients, she said.

Combining the healing aspects of a spa with medical treatments is a concept well established on the mainland and in Europe, Sakaguchi said. It also goes back to Greek and Roman times, he said. "It is a very old idea waiting to happen here in Hawaii."

He said patients have lost time and physical contact with their doctors because of financial, insurance and litigation concerns. "They've lost what I call the Marcus Welby thing. How can we get back to that?" (Marcus Welby was a family doctor played by actor Robert Young in a TV series from 1969 to 1976.)

In patient Lauren Faulkner's view, the ZenSpa & Medical Office has the Marcus Welby factor and much more. An owner of Fine Art Associates, she went to see Sakaguchi as a patient in June and started talking to the aestheticians about products and spa services. "It's so great. You just sit there and feel so pampered."

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