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# NEW YORK



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PRETTY HURTS

## FLAWLESS

*A new microlift machine tries to solve the age-old problem of aging.*

By Rebecca Harrington

THE BEAUTY INDUSTRY has devised a new technology to stave off the dread and existential horror caused by female old age: It involves pulsing electric current into your face with a handheld device you charge in your bathroom. This apparently stops you from getting wrinkles, without giving you the perpetually serene, mask-like expression we have come to expect from Botox. Which is too bad. That was really starting to grow on me.

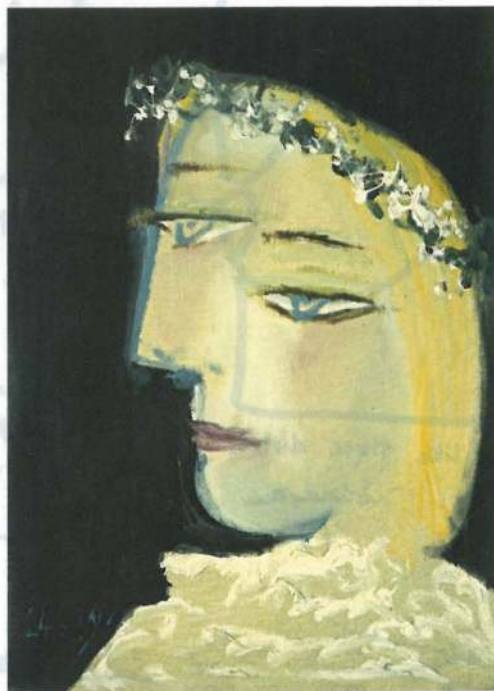
The Caci microlift (one of the more popular devices) looks a bit like an electric toothbrush, but instead of a brush head it has four “electro buds” filled with a “serum.” The buds conduct electricity onto your face. You choose one of two modes: One is for “toning” and the other is for “wrinkles.” You are supposed to do both modes to truly see transformation.

The only problem with the Caci is that it’s not approved by the FDA in the U.S. (Congress!!! Why?) Luckily, New York celebrity facialist Georgia Louise of the Georgia Louise Atelier (she puts electricity into Emma Stone’s face) let me borrow hers.

On the first day of my experiment, I take the Caci out of the case and insert its serum-filled electro buds to start toning my face. “Toning your face” is like performing noninvasive surgery using only calipers. Essentially, you grasp the

fleshy parts of your face with the Caci and hold your skin between two electro-conductors in the style of Dr. Frankenstein. I can feel the electricity pulsing through my skin, and it mildly hurts, as if I’d just put my hand over a lightbulb. At one point, I feel like I’m going to faint and need to sit down. But I do not blame this on the Caci.

Next I do the wrinkles program, which requires moving the tongs rapidly over all the places you could possibly get wrinkles (in other words, your whole unfortunate face). You do this for several minutes. This feels a bit like running over a carpet in stockinged feet. I feel shocks, but they are mostly thrilling, just as I imagine they were for Dr. Frankenstein. It does slightly hurt on the thin and vulnerable skin of my forehead. Yet that is also where most of my wrinkles are—is it working?



Cosmetic dermatologist Paul Jarrod Frank is dubious. “There is no science or literature that suggests that strengthening facial muscles—which are very different from weight-bearing skeletal muscles like biceps—helps with aging at all,” he says, and adds that any results you might see from the Caci are likely because it is “making the skin appear a bit swollen.” Happily, however, the risks are “minimal to none.”