A
n entirely new category of treatments is
entering the anti-aging arena: high-grade,
high-tech—and, yes—high-priced medi­
facials that are redefining the very notion of
what a facial is. These latest hybrids, usually
performed by doctors, are about real results
rather than mere relaxation, and promise
long-term benefits along with the short-term glow. In large
part, they are the result of advances in tools and techniques that
enable several technologies—including lasers, radio-frequency
and micro-current devices, light-emitting diodes (LEDs),
chemical peels, and more—to be crammed into a single session
instead of multiple visits. Even hybrids that include a good
old-fashioned mask use newfangled micro-current devices
to help products penetrate deeper into the skin. "We use the word 'facial,'
but really it's about synergistic treatments," says David
Colbert, M.D., the go-to dermatologist in New York
for Emma Stone and Sienna Miller. "We're working on the quality of skin, not just the surface layer, building
volume and sculpting the lines of the jaw." And unlike
more aggressive anti-aging treatments, there is little or
no redness or peeling with these customized facials,
so you can get up and glow that night. As you might
expect, celebrities, top models, and fashion A-listers are all angling for appointments for these new hybrids.
Before the last Victoria's Secret show in Paris, Adriana
Lima, Lily Aldridge, Stella Maxwell, and Lameka Fox
raced in for Colbert's brightening and lifting Runway
Facial ($2,000), which features five different technologies
in a one-hour session, combining radio-frequency and
infrared waves from the e’Two Sublime to lift and firm; microdermabrasion
to remove dead skin cells; Laser Genesis for toning; a chemical
peel; and red LED lights for brightening. Skin glows immedi­
ately after the treatment, but the real benefit lies in its ability to
build collagen as well as to help prevent age spots and fine lines
due to developing. "For some of the Victoria's Secret models,
we did the Runway Facial on their faces, legs, décolleté, arms,
and necks. Some even wanted tightening around the belly
button," says Colbert. Model Magdalena Frackowiak gets the
facial before every big event and fashion shoot. "It not only
gives me an extra glow; it tightens pores and renders my skin
supersoft and tight," she tells *Bazaar*. For lasting results, Colbert
recommends getting the facial every two months. Should the cost prove too staggering, choosing one or two of the
individual treatment elements alone (say, microdermabrasion)
will help maintain the glow. As with all facials, it's imperative
to use sunscreen with an SPF of at least 30 between visits.
Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D., Madonna's dermatologist of choice
in New York, rebuts any notion that these extravagantly priced
facials are just for celebrities. "We're fully booked," he says.
"They're great for people who don't have the luxury of taking
time off from work or are afraid of more aggressive treatments." For some women, the hybrid facials are a way of avoiding injectables (i.e., Botox and hyaluronic acid fillers) or at least of buying
time before starting them. Because so many techniques are fit
into a single session, these hybrids can also function as a sampler
of in-office anti-aging options that can then be cherry-picked
for future visits based on your specific skin-perfecting needs.
Madonna opts for Frank's Build Repair
Polish (BRP), Medical Facial ($1,500). The 30-minute,
noninvasive procedure, customized for each client, starts
with the Exilis Ultra, a device that combines ultrasound
and radio frequency, aiming waves deep into the skin
to build collagen and to tighten and tone. This is followed
by Laser Genesis to repair sun damage, and is topped
off with a wrinkle-softening polish using another laser,
the Fraxel Permè. "Each element is separately effective,
but when you combine them they work on every layer
of skin," explains Frank, adding, "You should only need
this facial a few times a year." Which suddenly makes
the high cost sound more reasonable if you consider
that many women shell out $150 to $300 a month at
their local spa for a basic maintenance facial.
For those who want an instant amped-up glow without
any lasers, Frank's in-office aesthetician, Edyta Jarosz, offers
the MDNA Skin Facial ($800–$1,200). The 90-minute
treatment features the MDNA Skin skin-care line, rich in minerals from thermal springs in the Tuscan town
of Montecatini. "Madonna is obsessed with skin care," Frank
says. (The line, currently available in Japan, is being developed
by Frank and Jarosz in conjunction with Madonna, and will
launch in the U.S. in September.) The multifaceted facial
includes a volcanic clay mask removed by a magnetic device;
micro-currents to tighten, and cold blasts of bacteria-busting
oxygen aimed at your face while you lie under a range of
blasting LED lights to boost collagen production, calm inflam­
ation, and even out skin tone. It all feels very Disneyland,
and while the results may not last as long as the laser facials,
you will walk out with truly luminous, tightened, and toned
skin on your face and neck. Belly buttons are optional.
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BEAUTY BAZAAR IS Clinical Sheild Recovery Balm contains ceramides and hyaluronic acid to soothe and hydrate your post-procedure face ($68).