

**M**ore than the movies, the recent awards season in Hollywood was all about playing the game of “did she or didn’t she?”. Facelift? Botox? Lipo? Or are Cate Blanchett, Charlize Theron and Reese Witherspoon really that genetically blessed while the rest of us helplessly sag, wrinkle and mottle?

“Other than the kid who was in the movie Room, everyone’s getting something done,” says the New York dermatologist Dendy Engelman. “But if you can tell that there’s work, I haven’t done my job.”

Call them “tweakments”. Gone are the days of obvious nose jobs, eyelifts, frozen Botoxed foreheads and chipmunk cheek filler. Instead, new technologies and techniques using injectables and lasers allow doctors to do little “tweaks”, making cosmetic work harder to spot and, many doctors argue, maybe even staving off the ultimate need to do the big stuff such as a facelift.

“People are starting younger and making small, regular adjustments part of their routine,” says the New York cosmetic surgeon Paul Frank. “It’s like working out or cleaning your apartment — you can’t just do it once in the spring. A-list patients are often at my office monthly.”

With this shift, an elite group of dermatologists and cosmetic surgeons find themselves in demand for their light hands and innovative tactics that leave everyone guessing. The secret is treating areas you might not have expected. Case in point: Engelman uses filler in the temples to make the face look less hollow, in the lower corners of the jaw to pull up jowls and sharpen the jawline, in the scalp and hairline to even out brows or give a full-on brow-lift effect, and in only the very upper parts of the cheeks to lessen dark circles under the eyes and the parentheses around the mouth. For the particularly

fussy patient, such as those who find themselves on HD TV, she will do a 30-minute “airbrushing”, to fill in microscopic lines from forehead to chest.

On an even more minute scale, the Los Angeles derm Annie Chiu shrinks pores using a device called an AquaGold, a tiny canister with 20 24-carat-gold microneedles, less than a millimetre long, filled with diluted Botox. By stamping it across the cheeks and forehead, she disperses a superficial amount of the paralyzing toxin into the skin, causing pores to relax and reduce. She takes a similar approach to lips. Rather than going full-on Kylie Jenner, Chiu does a “glossing”, using a tiny needle to inject micro-droplets of hyaluronic acid filler — which is naturally hydrating — across the lips for a dewy, glossy look that lasts about two months. And she’s always keen to fill in the earlobes — an age giveaway most dermatologists ignore.

Tweakments don’t stop at the face. “I can instantly make someone look 10lb lighter just by removing the fat under the arms and in front of the armpit,” says Frank, who uses liposuction. Other experts are using the new fat-dissolving injectable

Kybella, which is approved for the double chin, but, off label, is especially good at nixing those annoying little pockets that hang over a strapless dress.

The most sensitive group of patients probably go to the dermatologist Tina Alster, whose office is two blocks from the White House in Washington. “We have a lot of male politicians and people from Capitol Hill on TV who come in to get the redness in their cheeks lasered away, so they don’t look like they’re blushing, or Botox between their eyebrows so they don’t look as angry,” she says. Alster also uses the toxin in the armpits, scalp and palms of the hands to stop the sweating that occurs under TV lights or while glad-handing at fundraisers.

Part of a good tweakment is also what you leave behind, though. “If I have a patient who really wants to chase every little line, I’ll work hard to convince them to keep their crow’s feet,”

**Everyone’s getting something done. But if you can tell there’s WORK, I haven’t done my JOB**

# Spot the tweakment

The days of flaunting obvious ‘work’ are over. The new wave of subtle cosmetic procedures is quick, hi-tech and leaves everyone guessing, says *Katie Becker*



of subtle cosmetic procedures is quick,

Engelman says. “I think it looks nice, like you’re really smiling, and it makes the rest of the work seem more believable.”

The Beverly Hills dermatologist Harold Lancer, who proudly claims he had 32 patients on the Oscars red carpet last month, could be considered the tweakment king. With a high-profile following that includes Victoria Beckham, Beyoncé and Scarlett Johansson, Lancer answers to celebs and agents whose greatest fear is that awards broadcasts will cut from the clip of the nominated performance, which was shot months before, to the nominee in the live audience, and the images won’t match up. “If their face looks obviously different between then and now, someone is going to kill me,” he says.

A tweakment may sound simple, but it can be complex. Lancer starts his celebs on a strict rejuvenation plan four to six months before a big event. They come in every three to four weeks for a “power buffing”, done with his custom-made exfoliating machine that suctions in skin while stripping away dead cells, followed by a vegan stem-cell facial and LED light therapy coupled with pure oxygen. While toxins and fillers are staples in his practice (a favourite filler trick is to add a bit to the outer corners of the mouth, which lends the slightest Mona Lisa smile), Lancer’s latest obsession is NovaThreads, absorbable micro-threads that are injected into the skin in a basketweave pattern to lift and plump the skin. They also stimulate the production of collagen and elastin. The effect lasts long after the threads disappear a few months later.

For the full-on Lancer treatment, a patient should expect to be in his office about twice a month and, he says, shell out about \$50,000 (£35,000) a year. But the payoff looks something like Beckham or Brie Larson, who follow his non-surgical routine – which includes strict dietary rules and at-home skincare – “to the micro letter”, Lancer says.

So, what about the rest of us? Lancer says you could see a huge difference by following the right skincare regimen and cutting sugar, caffeine, dairy and salt from your diet. Otherwise, you could book in to see the tweakment king himself. Just be prepared for the \$10,000 bill. ●

## The top five tweakments to try

### **Deep mesotherapy – Dr Frances Prenna Jones**

£300 for 30 minutes

**What to expect** Tiny injections of vitamins, minerals, amino acids and hyaluronic acid to perk up poor collagen, general dullness and lack of elasticity. [drfrancesprennajones.com](http://drfrancesprennajones.com)

### **Ultherapy – Dr Benji Dhillon**

From £2,000 for up to one hour

**What to expect** Noninvasive ultrasound energy will tighten and lift the face. It can enhance the jawline and neckline or gently lift brows. [phiclinic.com](http://phiclinic.com)

### **The Scaddle lift – Dr Barbara Sturm**

From £1,200 for up to one hour

**What to expect** Hyaluronic acid injections into different facial compartments for added volume and improved contours of specific features. [dr-barbara-sturm.de](http://dr-barbara-sturm.de)

### **The contour lift – Dr Jonquille Chantrey**

From £350 for up to 20 minutes

**What to expect** It lightens under-eye dark circles and softens crow’s feet with tiny Juvéderm injections. [drjonquille.co.uk](http://drjonquille.co.uk)

### **MD Codes – Dr Vicky Dondos**

From £450 for 30 minutes

**What to expect** Small amounts of filler in different strategic points to make your expression less harsh, less angry or less tired. [medicetics.com](http://medicetics.com)

### **The Botox pen – Dr Jules Nabet**

£280 for up to 20 minutes

**What to expect** The mini motorised pen is 50% less painful and more accurate than the traditional Botox needle. It can target areas as close as 1cm from the eye area. [julesnabet.com](http://julesnabet.com)

## Have they or haven't they?



NICOLE KIDMAN



ROBIN WRIGHT



CINDY CRAWFORD



JENNIFER ANISTON