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FROM THE NEW YORK POST
MAY 5, 2016

The Best of Everything

**THE
BEAUTY
ISSUE**

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THE NEW BLACK'
BREAKOUT STAR
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STANDARD

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INK**

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PHOTO BY BEN HASSETT

TREATMENT

MULTIPLE PIERCINGS

Skin care pins its hopes on anti-aging micro-needling

By DANA WOOD

BOTOX and fillers aren't the only skin-beautifiers to work their magic via contact with sharp objects. The rising tide of derma-rollers and spiky new face patches allows users to "micro-needle" at home, without the assistance of an esthetician or dermatologist.

With the promise of boosting collagen production and deeper delivery of serums and moisturizers, micro-needling started to gain traction in the US about two years ago. It's considered an offshoot of France's mesotherapy, a technique that involves injections of vitamins, plant extracts and homeopathic meds into the mesoderm (the layer of tissue just beneath the skin) to dissolve fat and cellulite and tighten facial contours. In contrast, micro-needling merely pierces the skin, just enough to open the pores to allow products to sink in. The microscopic wounds, meanwhile, trigger the growth of collagen in the skin.

When it's combined with radio frequency, as it is in a dermatologist's office, micro-needling is said to yield impressive results in scar and stretch-mark reduction.

San Francisco-based skin doc Kathy Fields, half of the dual-derm team behind the Rodan + Fields treatment line, says micro-needling is on point. "I just attended the American Academy of Dermatology meeting in March," she says, "and I can tell you, it's bigger than ever."

Fields and her partner offer micro-needling in their practices and also market the AMP MD system, featuring a home derma-roller and retinol-laced serum. "The first time you use it, you might feel a little 'ouch,'" says Fields. "But you'll quickly adapt."

The key differences between in-office micro-needling and DIY derma-rollers are the style of piercing — machine versus manual — and the size of the needles. While pro needles range from 0.5 to 2 millimeters, those in home devices clock in at 0.2 millimeters.

Despite the short needles, New York dermatologist Paul Frank isn't a fan of haphazard home rolling. "The tracks are laid down unevenly," he says. "That uneven traumatization of the skin can result in poor healing."

A London import — 111Skin's Meso Infusion Micro Mask, with hyaluronic acid and vitamin C — was created to mimic mesotherapy treatments offered at the company's Harley Street clinic. The take-home "mask" comprises multiple patches shaped to fit expression areas, which breed crow's feet and frown lines.

In the future, those patches could also drift south. "We're producing masks for areas blighted with cellulite and have seen incredible results," says founder Yannis Alexandrides, MD, a plastic surgeon. "I believe the future of skin care is advanced science applied to products that are easy to use at home."



1. AMP MD System, \$200 at rodanandfields.com

2. Peter Thomas Roth Professional Strength MicroPoint PM Patch System, \$125 at sephora.com

3. 111Skin Meso Infusion Hyaluronic Acid & Vitamin C Micro Mask, \$160 at spacenk.com

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