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# Women's Health

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# Cool Factor

Some of the hottest beauty treatments around use subzero temperatures to get you gorgeous from head to toe.

By Karina Giglio

The cold shoulder is never a good thing. But a cold face, hair, and thighs can be wondrous. Allow us to explain: “Coldness has long been used therapeutically because it’s excellent at reducing inflammation, a condition our bodies are constantly fighting,” says Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D., a clinical assistant professor of dermatology at NYU Langone Medical Center. “But it can also be used to safely destroy unwanted cells, whether it’s fat or skin growths. Those two unique qualities are making cold the hot new medium for cosmetic treatments.” Take your pick of these high-tech, temperature-dropping products and procedures—or simply turn your own refrigerator into a powerful beauty tool.

## ■ Minimize Redness

Amateur dermatology lesson: When an external irritant like a gritty facial scrub (or sunburn—tsk-tsk) meets up with sensitive skin or rosacea, the body responds by rushing more inflammatory molecules into the blood, making your skin even madder. “Cooling the skin narrows the blood vessels, which shuts down the highway that’s delivering the redness,” says Erin Gilbert, M.D., Ph.D., an assistant professor of dermatology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center.

Prepare in advance: Soak a few soft washcloths in whole milk, squeeze out the excess liquid, and store the cloths in the fridge. When you get red in the face (or body), apply for 15 to 20 minutes. “The fat in milk doubles as a calming, nourishing moisturizer,” says Gilbert. Not a DIY girl? Try (1) Korres Yoghurt Instant Soothing Gel (\$38, sephora.com); it has menthyl lactate, an ingredient that “has a cooling effect on skin,” says cosmetic chemist Ni’Kita Wilson.

## ■ Zap Spider Veins

Fact: Roughly one out of every two women has spider veins. Hypothesis: 99.9 percent of those who have been treated with sclerotherapy—20 to 50 tiny injections of a solution that collapses the veins—wish it were less painful. Wish granted. A device called Zimmer Cryo 6, now rolling out to dermatologists’ offices nationwide, numbs each injection spot right before the needle goes in with a supercold (-22°F) blast of air, explains Luis Navarro, M.D., medical director of The Vein Treatment Center in New York City. The numbness wears off within five minutes, but the cold may also help prevent bruising, says Navarro. Sclerotherapy costs around \$400 to \$1,000; there’s no additional charge for Zimmer Cryo 6.

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## ■ Stop Makeup Meltdown

Ever wondered where the term *hot mess* came from? One theory: "Sweating and humidity dilute makeup, and that moisture causes it to evaporate," says David J. Goldberg, M.D., a clinical professor of dermatology and director of laser research at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. (Hormone fluctuations during your period and stress can stoke your internal temp too.)

After you apply your makeup, spray on four pumps of (2) Urban Decay Dew Me Moisturizing Makeup Setting Spray (\$29, sephora.com). "It contains two coolants that absorb heat and pull it away from your face," says Wilson. Because the coolants are encapsulated in tiny nanospheres, the effect isn't fleeting—when makeup artist Emily Kate Warren tested the spray, it lasted most of the day.

## ■ Freeze Off Fat

If feeling the burn at your gym hasn't banished as much bulge as you'd hoped, consider feeling the freeze. CoolSculpting is an FDA-cleared (surgery-free!) treatment that targets jiggle

on your belly and love handles. "Extremely cold temperatures destroy fat cells permanently, and this technology lets us do that without damaging the skin," explains Goldberg, who participated in the FDA trials. Patients often see a 20 to 24 percent fat reduction after just one treatment (each area costs \$700 to \$1,500).

How it works: A soup-bowl-size vacuum-cup applicator sucks in bulges of fat and cools each area for about an hour; the fat cells are flushed out of the body naturally. As with lipo, CoolSculpting works best if you're in good shape, with small trouble spots. But unlike liposuction, it's not terribly painful, and there's no downtime or risky side effects.

## ■ Pump Up Puny Strands

Most of us know what happens when a hot laser meets body hair: It zaps away stubble for a long-term Brazilian bikini line. But cold lasers such as MEP-90 use a low level of energy to do the exact opposite—penetrate the scalp and trigger hair growth. "The energy gets thinner, weaker follicles to regrow in a stronger, healthier way," says Alan J. Bauman, M.D., a hair



transplant surgeon in Boca Raton, Florida.

## ■ De-puff Eyes

Whether the cause is allergens (like pollen), dehydration (from salt or alcohol), or a good cry, eyes puff when blood vessels dilate and rush blood and fluid to the area. Ice packs can be an effective way to reduce swelling. Increase the benefits by freezing cotton pads soaked in freshly brewed caffeinated green or black tea: Cold plus caffeine equals extra tightening, and tea's catechins have anti-inflammatory properties. Hold the pads over your eyes for 15 minutes, massaging them into the skin for the first five minutes to help break up excess fluid. As a quick fix, rub on (3) Estée Lauder Idealist Cooling Eye Illuminator (\$58, esteelauder.com). Its ceramic tip—inspired by technology used to keep temps down in space shuttles—is permanently chilled.

## ■ Calm Angry Zits

Cryogenic therapy sounds like

something out of *Total Recall*. Also known as the CO<sub>2</sub> Slushy, this doctor's-office treatment "cools and alleviates inflamed cystic acne," says Frank. CO<sub>2</sub> dry ice is shaved into a "snowball," wrapped in gauze, dipped into acetone, then sipped onto the face or body for a few minutes to mildly exfoliate and impart antibacterial and anti-inflammatory benefits. "It calms the breakout and minimizes redness instantly," he says. The treatment costs about \$175 per monthly session.

## ■ Relax Wrinkles

Whereas Botox uses a toxin to block nerve impulses to the injected muscles, cryoneuromodulation is an in-office treatment—not yet approved by the FDA—that stuns wrinkle-causing muscles into relaxing via injections with small, frigid needles (called cryoprobes). "Wrinkles are instantly smoothed," says Frank. "But it's not as predictable as Botox." Stay tuned. ■



### Cold Comfort

Pack your bags with these feel-good goodies, each touched by Jack Frost.

**1/ Your makeup bag:** When your skin gets shiny around 3 p.m., dust on *Revlon ColorStay Aqua Mineral Finishing Powder* (\$14, at drugstores), a loose mattifying powder infused with cooling coconut water.

**2/ Your gym bag:** *Mission Enduracool Instant Cooling Towel* (\$15, at *Dick's Sporting Goods* stores) is made of special fabric that not only absorbs sweat but also circulates water molecules, preventing you from overheating while you're working out.

**3/ Your beach bag:** *Banana Boat Sport Performance CoolZone Continuous Spray Sunscreen SPF 30* (\$9, at drugstores) delivers chilled broad-spectrum UVA/UVB protection—making sunscreen reapplication just a little bit less chore-like.