

PLASTIC SURGERY

5 ways to younger skin without surgery

Facelifts and ablative lasers may be the gold standard for skin rejuvenation, but come with significant recovery time. Non-invasive modalities are becoming increasingly popular for their convenience.



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For those squeamish about surgery or too busy to take time off, non-invasive skin rejuvenation procedures offer a lower level of risk and modest success in correcting pigmentation, sagging skin and other concerns. Here are five popular non-invasive skin treatments.

1

Ultherapy

This is an ultrasound treatment that mimics the effects of a facelift without surgery. It works inside-out, treating the deep layers of skin using a special transducer that emits ultrasound and heat waves. The device allows the doctor to visualise the different skin layers and direct the heat energy with more precision. The waves stimulate skin cells to produce new collagen naturally. Over time, the underlying layers of skin gently and gradually plump up to counteract the effects of time and gravity. Ultherapy has little to no down time although some patients may experience redness of the skin, like a light sunburn, after the treatment. Ultherapy can now be used to treat and improve sweaty armpits.

2

Lightwave Biolaser

This is a popular laser technique for the treatment of scars and post-pregnancy stretch marks. It can also reduce the appearance of ageing and sun-damaged skin. The laser triggers the regenerative mechanism in the skin, coaxing it to replenish collagen and elastin. Apart from making scars less obvious, the laser can be used to treat tired, flaccid skin — including on the breasts and abdomen. The light waves also stimulate microcirculation to facilitate the elimination of excess fluids in the fatty tissue to reduce the appearance of cellulite. Consistent treatment over eight to 10 sessions will produce noticeable changes. For long-term effects, regular sessions are recommended.

3

IPL Photorejuvenation

This is a favourite 'lunchtime facial' that uses special filtered light to selectively destroy pigmentation in skin cells, blood-filled capillaries, hair roots and spider veins. This process is called selective photothermolysis. Intense pulsed light, or more accurately, flash lamps, also activate blood circulation, kill acne-causing bacteria and stimulate collagen production. The results are dependent upon a person's skin condition; on the average, improvement can be expected after five to eight monthly sessions.



4

Microdermabrasion

This is type of 'polish' for the skin that uses a spray of microcrystals to slough away the topmost layer of dead skin cells. This leaves the skin feeling smooth and vibrant — no pain or scarring is involved. The procedure also stimulates blood flow to the skin's surface to increase oxygenation and boost cell renewal and collagen growth. A full face treatment generally takes 20 to 30 minutes, depending on the extent of the procedure. Make-up can be applied directly after treatment. Patients typically report a healthy flush or glow to the skin. Some may experience slight redness and peeling akin to being mildly sun- or wind-burnt, although these side effects wear off in a day or two.

5

Cosmelan depigmentation

This therapy addresses the problem of pigmentation at its root. The treatment tackles pigmentation concerns such as melasma, post-pimple or acne marks, freckles, scars and uneven skin tone. Treatment takes place in two stages: the first in the clinic and the second at home. A special mask is placed on the skin for a period of time to be decided by the doctor. At home, patients will be advised on when and for how long to put on the second mask. In 15 to 30 days, the skin will become clearer, softer and more even. The treatment also has other benefits, such as mild wrinkle reduction and skin tightening. Post-treatment, it is important to use sun protection diligently to maintain and prolong the longevity of the results. 



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