

procedure OF THE month

MESOTHERAPY

Needle-free skin rejuvenation? Where do we sign up?

Sadly, once we hit our mid-twenties (and I'm somewhere past that), the skin's metabolism slows down and rejuvenates more slowly, allowing dead cells to accumulate, which causes the dreaded dullness in appearance. The thinner that dead layer is, the more radiant our skin is. With this in mind – after all, who doesn't want to look younger and more fresh-faced? – I jumped at the chance to try out mesotherapy. I headed to the Melrose Aesthetic Centre in Joburg for an appointment with Dr Mark Opperman and the

promise of more radiant, plumped skin.

The process started in a fairly predictable way – with a good cleanse to remove make-up. Having never had a chemical peel before, I was somewhat nervous (okay, extremely nervous) about the superficial peel with alpha-hydroxy acids (AHAs) that preceded

The entire procedure takes just 30 minutes, so you could nip off in your lunch hour.

the mesotherapy, but my fears were totally unfounded. The peel felt just like a face mask, and although it tingled and prickled a little, it certainly didn't hurt. Dr Opperman warned me there would be some mild flushing, and initially there was, but since my skin flushes easily it was hardly surprising. Within an hour it had disappeared.

Dr Opperman explained that the superficial peel stimulates the skin's basal layer, which in turn speeds up rejuvenation. He also explained that while some peels are harsher than others, a superficial peel using AHAs takes away the top layers of dead skin to reveal the more radiant skin underneath. It's this process that prepares the skin for the treatment that follows. Once the peel was removed, a neutralising cream was applied and I was ready for the main act.

The mesotherapy itself is a soothing cocktail of potent vitamins and antioxidants delivered directly into the mesoderm – the middle layer of the skin – via a radio frequency procedure. Previously this was achieved using micro-injections into the skin, but as Dr Opperman explained, this could cause inflammation. Radio frequency technology transports the molecules straight into the skin – good news for needle-phobes.

The aim of the process – which will set you back between R895 to

R1695 depending on the treatment – is to discourage future wrinkles, as well as restore skin to a more youthful state. The hyaluronic acid in mesotherapy is a pure amino acid that returns moisture to the skin. The application felt like a gentle massage and was remarkably quick. The peel and mesotherapy together take just 30 minutes, so you could nip off in your lunch hour.

Immediately afterwards my skin felt soft, smooth and soothed. Getting into the lift, I'll confess that I sighed a bit at the sight of my slightly red face, but in less than an hour my skin had returned to normal and I'd had my first compliment from a friend who said that my skin 'looked glowing and amazing'. Better yet, my skin felt hydrated and velvety. The following day a colleague commented on how fantastic I looked, and even my husband noticed. Would I do it again? In a heartbeat! It was so simple, painless and quick – and the results speak for themselves. ❖

Dr Mark Opperman's recommendations:

- It's not cheap, but start in your twenties if you can. Mesotherapy once a month eliminates the need for facials.
 - Make sure you seek out a reputable practitioner and ask questions about their qualifications, because this is a medical procedure – although some skilled cosmetologists perform the treatment, too.
 - Winter is a fantastic time to do mesotherapy, because there is less UVA radiation, and hence less threat to your newly exposed, delicate skin.
 - Sunscreen is a must, preferably applied more than once a day. Your sunscreen should provide protection against both UVA and UVB rays, so read that packaging before you buy. Dr Opperman also recommends a hat as an essential tool for protecting your skin's health.
- Melrose Aesthetic Centre: (011) 214 9940 or 0861 0861 372 6869.**
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DIY options

There are a host of DIY options available that yield great results.

- 1. Filorga's Cell Stimulation Program R3030** improves firmness, elasticity, radiance and wrinkles. This three-week programme includes a roller with micro-needles (it's not painful in the least) that stimulates microcirculation and allows the active ingredients to penetrate deeply.
- 2. Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair Synchronized Recovery Complex R620** is loaded with antioxidants and gives the skin a boost, improving moisture levels, fine lines, wrinkles and radiance.
- 3. Environ Roll Cit R256** is a small hand-held needling device that allows you to treat the eye area and mouth. Use it in conjunction with Ionzyme Focus Hydrating Serum R485, which is loaded with antioxidants, vitamins and peptides to improve hydration, thereby minimising the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles.



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