



THE DOCTOR WON'T SEE YOU NOW

Targeted anti-ageing serums, powerful peels and gadgets primed to give your skin a lift... the latest beauty breakthroughs are so futuristic, they allow you to bring professional-grade treatments into the comfort of your home

Words by FIONA EMBLETON

Gravity is a major downer in more ways than one. Its tug is constantly working against your cheeks and jawline. Then, eventually, after the age of 30, gravity colludes with the natural breakdown of fat, collagen and elastin to cause skin to droop, on average, 4mm over the next 20 years. “The effects of gravity not only make us appear older, but they change how others view us on an emotional level,” says Virginie Couturaud, Dior’s Scientific Communications Director. “Our neuroscience research found that sagging on the lower face, and around the corner of the eyes and mouth, can trick the brain into thinking we look ‘distraught’, ‘afraid’, ‘sad’ or ‘angry’.”

The uplifting news? There’s still a lot we can do to fight back. Clever science-backed products, crafted to reinforce your skin’s structure, have arrived. Used in tandem with at-home gadgets, they go a long way to keeping your cheekbones and jawline taut as a drum. ►

MAIN IMAGE: JASON LLOYD-EVANS

Liquid assets

After studying 200 different eye shapes, Dior scientists have now discovered that the skin here ages in two distinct ways. There is a sharp drop in the energy skin cells need to renew themselves. Added to this is a 60 per cent reduction in the -SMA protein responsible for elasticity, which contributes to signs of skin wear. “This means the area is less toned and signs of fatigue accumulate as the skin around the eyes is almost twice as thin as elsewhere on the face,” says Virginie. Dior’s new Capture Totale Super Potent Eye Serum has a massaging tip and is heavy in actives like rye to boost the -SMA protein by 80 per cent; oat polysaccharides for immediate tightening and a plant complex that boosts the overall energy function of your cells, so they behave like younger skin.

Guerlain’s Orchidée Impériale Micro-Lift Concentrate has also sprung from new research into skin cell behaviour. Frédéric Bonté, Director of Scientific Research at Guerlain, says, “Lack of oxygen in cells causes a loss of tension in the skin’s structure, leading to sagging. Our orchid extracts have been shown to stimulate a protein, which improves oxygen supply within cells and boosts the energy production that leads to firmer skin.” This cooling gel contains 7,000 ‘micro-sculpting’ beads that burst on contact with the skin, delivering the hero ingredient for both immediate and long-term lift.

Meanwhile, dermatologists agree that retinol works on improving collagen production and the latest formulas have gone from strength to strength. Based on 22 years of research, L’Oréal Paris Revitalift Laser Pure Retinol Night Serum contains 0.2 per cent retinol, which is normally a starting dose for many prescription brands, alongside hyaluronic acid to soften the potential for dryness and irritation. Likewise, Shiseido’s Vital Perfection Intensive WrinkleSpot Treatment contains pure retinol to build type III collagen, having discovered that its demise is the cause of smile lines. And Kate Somerville’s KateCeuticals Resurfacing Overnight Peel, which is inspired by her Melrose Place resurfacing treatments, contains retinol and glycolic acid encapsulated in ceramides, to slow their release while still accelerating cell renewal.



Go go gadgets

When more heavy lifting is needed, take a technical approach to your skincare concerns. “Devices are a great non-invasive investment as they use both preventative and restorative technology,” says celebrity aesthetician Shani Darden, who tends to famous faces like Jessica Alba.

Of these, microcurrent remains the most popular for lifting sunken cheeks back to their original perky position. The two metallic spheres at the tip of the NuFace Trinity Facial Toning Device work together to send low-level electricity into the skin for results likened to a 24-hour facelift. The Foreo Bear goes one step further by combining microcurrent with sonic pulsations to boost circulation and banish 7am face puff. “Microcurrent sends tiny electro waves into muscles to make them contract, the same way they would if you were doing a gym work out,” says Debbie Thomas, a laser expert who incorporates microcurrent in her treatments. “Each time the muscle contracts and relaxes it becomes stronger and tighter. With multiple sessions you will see improved lift, definition and circulation.”

Shani, meanwhile, is a fan of using high-level sound waves to stimulate cells and target wrinkles far beyond the top layers of skin (2.4 inches beyond, to be exact). Her Facial Sculpting Wand achieves deeper muscle stimulation than manual massage and jumpstarts collagen production and blood circulation for both glow and contour. “Sound waves target crow’s feet, eyebrow furrows and nasolabial lines at the source, rather than on a superficial level,” she explains.

Another restorative tool is The Light Salon Boost LED Face Mask. Like a high-tech sheet mask, it uses red and near-infrared lights to “improve blood flow and tissue oxygenation in order to increase skin firmness and hydration,” says co-founder Laura Ferguson. “LED also helps to re-charge the ‘energy’ battery in the skin to repair and rejuvenate damaged cells. A cell that has been charged by light is able to perform 150-200 per cent more efficiently.”

Finally, it’s no secret that the skin’s barrier is so good at keeping things out, even skincare ingredients have a hard time pushing through. In response, RÉDUIT has launched Uni, a device beloved by Huda Kattan, which powers 12 different skin treatments (there are also 12 for hair). It works by turning pods with dermatologist-vetted actives like hydrolysed collagen and niacinamide into a micro-fine mist that penetrates the skin deeper than the average topical skincare product. Clever, no? ■