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+RUNWAY REPORT
Forget the old axiom that beauty is pain. Surgical face-lifts and aggressive lasers that keep you under house arrest and on strong meds are taking a backseat to procedures that promise to help you age gracefully with minimal downtime and recovery. "Not only are we seeing better results with the latest generation of minimally invasive technology, the amount of downtime required with these treatments is also shrinking considerably," says Mitchell Chasin, medical director of Reflections Center for Skin & Body in New Jersey. "We can now deliver dramatic results without people missing a beat out of their busy lives." Read on for the most buzzed-about options.

**SKIN ILLUMINATOR: CLEAR + BRILLIANT**

THINK OF THIS NEW GENTLE LASER as a facial on steroids. Clear + Brilliant uses fractional laser technology to create microzones of energy, causing a wound-healing response underneath the skin's surface that stimulates collagen production, which boosts radiance and plumps lines. "The big advancement with this laser is that it's safe on all skin colors and you don't have to rearrange your social or professional life" for recovery, says New York City dermatologist Anne Chapas. Investment: $250 to $500 per treatment.

**Ideal candidate:** A patient (between the ages of 30 and 40) looking for a preventative antiaging treatment stronger than over-the-counter topicals but gentler than intense lasers "who wants smoother skin but doesn't have time to be red and swollen for days," details Chapas.

**Problems targeted:** Fine lines and wrinkles, blotchiness, uneven tone and texture, and sun damage. "But this wouldn't be my laser of choice for treating deeper lines and wrinkles," says Chapas.

**Treatable areas:** Face, neck, chest, and hands.

**Treatments needed:** Six treatments spaced two weeks apart.

**Treatment length:** A topical anesthetic is applied for 15 to 20 minutes and is followed by the 20-minute laser treatment.

**Pain:** "Patients may feel a light tingling or mild pricking, but most don't feel anything at all," Chapas says. A small handheld laser-beam device is run up and down the skin.

**Downtime:** The skin is pink immediately after treatment (similar to post workout or a mild sunburn) but fades within a day. Dry skin can last for a couple of days.

**Results:** Smoother, more radiant skin, with improved tone and texture and a reduction in fine lines and wrinkles with a visible difference in how your skin feels after one treatment, promises Chapas.

**Risks:** Prolonged redness, hyperpigmentation, and scarring are possible but "very rare," says Chapas.

**Maintenance:** Touch-ups are advised every three months.

**WRINKLE ERASER:**

**eMATRIX**

WHEREAS CLEAR + BRILLIANT helps prevent signs of aging before they appear, this device is aimed at eradicating fine lines and facial scars using fractionated bipolar radio-frequency technology. Translation: Heat energy is delivered beneath your skin's surface to trigger collagen production without damaging the epidermis (top layer), which means no recovery time necessary. "The beauty of eMatrix is that it spares the top layer of skin and deposits 95 percent of the energy into the dermis," says Chasin. Imagine an inverted ice cream cone, says Nashville dermatologist Michael Gold. The tip of the cone represents the energy on the surface, and the scoop is the remainder, which spreads out underneath the skin. Investment: $750 to $1,200 per treatment.

**Ideal candidate:** "A patient [age 35 to 45] who has early signs of aging—fine lines, some wrinkles. It's wonderful for acne scars and surface-texture issues," explains Chasin. Safe for all skin colors.

**Problems targeted:** Fine lines, surface
irregularities, pigmentation, wrinkles, and scars from acne, trauma, chicken pox, or surgery. Doctors praise this device for its scar-banishing abilities, “and if I can get scars to go away, I can get wrinkles to go away,” Gold says.

**Treatable areas:** Face, neck, chest, and hands.

**Treatments needed:** For lines and wrinkles, two to three treatments spaced four weeks apart; for scars, three to four treatments spaced two to three weeks apart.

**Treatment length:** A topical anesthetic is applied for 15 to 30 minutes and is followed by a 20-to-30-minute treatment.

**Pain:** “There is very little discomfort with this machine,” says Gold. Patients feel a prickling or tingling sensation. “Sometimes they don’t even need numbing,” he says. A handheld device (imagine a toy gun) with an electrode tip is placed onto the skin to deliver heat energy below the surface.

**Downtime:** “Patients are generally red for a day or two max. That’s it,” says Gold.

**Results:** Look for improvements in skin texture, fine lines and wrinkles, scars, and pore size after week three, with continued benefits (like skin tightening) for up to three or four months.

**Risks:** Hyperpigmentation and/or scarring is “extremely rare” but possible with any energy-based system, says Gold.

**Maintenance:** Lines and wrinkles are continuously affected by the sun, so follow up with a treatment after a year.

**NON-SURGICAL FACE-LIFT:**

**ePRIME**

“FACE-LIFTS ARE GREAT at tightening, but they don’t address thinning skin and volume loss,” explains Chasin. Enter ePrime, a new system that conquers all three and, according to a clinical study coauthored by Macrene Alexiades-Armenakas, dermatologist and assistant clinical professor at Yale University School of Medicine, promises significant skin tightening—37 percent of what you’d get with a face-lift. How? Derms are able to customize energy delivery to specific locations and depths, and “we can get away with that because we are able to measure the energy and temperature in real time and adjust it,” explains Chasin. Using small sensor needles, doctors are able to bypass the top layer of skin (where most complications occur) and deliver bipolar radio-frequency energy below the surface to safely maximize results. “This is a tremendous advance,” explains Alexiades-Armenakas. “Before, we were guessing the temperatures in the skin, and this led to lack of effectiveness and burns.” And ePrime doesn’t boost just collagen: “This is the first technology proven to stimulate elastin and hyaluronic-acid production,” says Chasin. Investment: $2,500 to $4,500 per treatment.

**Ideal candidate:** “A patient [age 40 to 55] with volume loss, hollowing and dips in the skin, deep wrinkles, acne scars, and sun damage,” says Chasin. “We use it to restabilize the whole supporting structure of the skin.” Safe for all skin colors.

**Problems targeted:** Deep lines and wrinkles, acne scars, and loss of supporting facial structure.

**Treatable areas:** The face. Evaluations are under way for use on the neck, arms, and stretch marks on the abdomen.

**Treatments needed:** One.

**Treatment length:** Local anesthetic is administered (the doctor may inject a low concentration of lidocaine and epinephrine through a cannula threaded under the skin to constrict blood vessels and prevent bruising caused by punctures) and is followed by a 45-to-60-minute treatment.

**Pain:** “Pain is a zero on a scale of one to 10,” says Chasin. A handheld device is equipped with five pairs of tiny, hair-thin needles that puncture the skin to deliver radio-frequency energy.

**Downtime:** Superficial bruising, redness, and swelling may last up to 48 hours, and the majority of patients return to regular activities in one day.

**Results:** “An overall improvement in skin tone and volume, with significant tightening of the skin and reduction in lines and wrinkles,” says Chasin. He adds, “Patients look younger and more vibrant, but they still look like themselves.”

**Risks:** No serious complications have been reported to date.

**Maintenance:** Doctors advise waiting one to three years before considering a second treatment.