

Microdermabrasion Revealed

Discover the Benefits

Chrissy Spehar

Holding back the sands of time is indeed an impossibility, and there is no such thing as the fountain of youth. Plastic surgery may be an option, but it's expensive, invasive, and may seem extreme. So perhaps now you are resigned to the fact that makeup is your only hope for hiding those inevitable wrinkles, fine lines, age spots, or even scars. But there are options.

Microdermabrasion is an exfoliating process that partially or completely clears the first layer of skin on the face and neck. First used in Europe in the 1980s, the technique has recently been adopted and popularized in the United States. With a wave of this magic wand, microdermabrasion can erase the

compare the process to moderate sandblasting of the skin.

According to Atlanta-based esthetician Alison O'Neil Andrew, "Within the last ten years this procedure has been found effective as a mild yet beneficial form of exfoliation. Although the equipment has the ability to ablate the skin when used in higher calibrations, it is generally used to enhance the efficacy of products used for treatment of the skin on a daily basis."

Is It Right for You?

Have you spent too much time in the sun? Do you have age spots and freckles you'd like to lose? Do you want to

*Good skin care
is a complete
program, not
just a facial.*

-Nadiya Soto



Many are discovering the benefits of microdermabrasion to ease wrinkles and even skin tones.

complexion imperfections that come with time. This may just be the treatment of choice for you.

How It Works

In the most commonly used method of microdermabrasion, a wand sprays fine crystals across the skin while dead skin cells are vacuumed off by a small suction device attached to the wand. Some

reduce fine lines, wrinkles, or stretch marks? Are you looking to diminish raised scar tissue? Or are you just hoping to refresh your complexion? As you can see, almost anyone can benefit from microdermabrasion. Performed repeatedly and consistently, microdermabrasion can also be a successful

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acne treatment because it encourages the production of skin cells and collagen, helping to eliminate blackheads and oiliness. Because the technique uses no harsh chemicals, it is great for those with chemical sensitivities, and can be used on all skin colors and types.

Quick and Easy

Most clients do not find the procedure to be painful, and it requires no anesthetic. Since the procedure is non-invasive, little preparation is required; simply remove your makeup and come to the treatment room with a clean face.

While you lie back and relax, your esthetician will apply the wand to your face in a slow, methodical way. You can expect the treatment to take about thirty minutes to an hour. Side effects are rare, and your skin will look glowing and fresh almost immediately after the treatment.

Aggressive treatments may cause the skin to look slightly pink and tender for a few hours, so discuss this possibility with your skin care professional. Typically, you can resume normal activities and apply makeup and moisturizer soon after your microdermabrasion session.

As for the results? "After a microdermabrasion session, the skin feels smoother and there is an evident improvement in circulation due to the suction or vacuuming component of the treatment," O'Neil Andrew says. "The best results," she explains, "are found when microdermabrasion is used in conjunction with a facial treatment--the skin performs in a healthier manner than before the procedure. For instance, acne or small blemishes heal faster."

Follow-up Details

Once you've completed your session, maintaining your new, healthier skin depends on a solid home care regimen. According to O'Neil Andrew, "Nothing matters more than an effective daily home care plan. It is an essential reason for seeing a professional who knows you and your skin on an on-going basis."

Home care for skin that has undergone microdermabrasion is fairly simple. Because fresh skin has been newly

exposed, it is important to avoid direct sunlight to the treated area for twenty-four hours after your session. In addition, always use sunscreen as an antiaging and protective measure. And, avoid products containing harsh chemicals, dyes, or perfumes until the skin has fully healed.

After the first twenty-four hours, resume your normal skin care routine and follow any special considerations, as determined by your esthetician.

"From the first visit on, the professional taking care of your skin will evaluate your daily regimen and update it as required according to your skin care needs at the time," says O'Neil Andrew.

To see best results, additional sessions should be scheduled at regular intervals, with the maximum number of treatments ranging from five to twelve,

spaced about three weeks apart. Once the initial grouping of sessions is completed, scheduling the occasional follow-up treatment is recommended.

One note: In some states, microdermabrasion can only be performed by a physician or by estheticians who meet certain requirements and/or who are supervised by a physician. Ensure your skin care professional has the proper training and credentials.

Microdermabrasion is an effective technique to address skin issues long considered something you just have to live with. While the fountain of youth remains a piece of fiction, the magic wand of microdermabrasion can have profound effects on your complexion. Fine lines, wrinkles, an uneven tone, stretch marks, scarring, and acne can be addressed.



Lie back and relax while your practitioner applies her magic wand of microdermabrasion.

Is the Season Getting You Down?

Shine the Light on Winter Blues

In northern climates when the heavy snows fall and the sun moves south, many people find their moods shift from upbeat to downright depressed. The severe form of winter depression--called seasonal affective disorder, or SAD--affects at least two million North Americans. Another thirty-nine million experience milder symptoms of moodiness and extended sleep patterns that somewhat resemble hibernation.

Overeating, sleeping for prolonged periods, mood swings, carbohydrate cravings, and weight gain during winter months may be more than just symptoms of cabin fever. They can suggest a biochemical reaction caused by a lack of exposure to sunlight.

Like all living things, we humans are sensitive to the seasons and sunlight. We secrete a hormone called melatonin, which helps us sleep at night and stay awake during the day. Melatonin production is directly linked to sun exposure. So, as the days get shorter

during the winter, our bodies produce more and more melatonin and we can literally feel like going into a cave and hibernating.

Many SAD sufferers manage their seasonal depression with daily exposure to full-spectrum lamps or light boxes. By getting daily doses of natural light, they can fool their brains into thinking it's summertime, and their need to sleep decreases.

Recent research shows that timing these light therapy sessions to our natural biological clocks is even more beneficial than usage during the day. Exposure to natural spectrum bright light for thirty minutes on awakening is twice as effective as evening sessions, and one study found this practice actually had an 80 percent chance of sending SAD into remission.

If winter blues are getting to you, consider investing in a full spectrum lamp and use it first thing in the morning--because SAD is for the bears.



Loosen the grip of seasonal affective disorder.

Flax Facts

Reap the Health Benefits of This Little Seed

Flaxseed, the humble little brown seed with a nutty flavor, is a powerhouse in the nutrition world. It's able to reduce blood pressure, decrease risk of heart attacks and stroke, improve skin quality, help control blood sugar levels, reduce cholesterol, and even prevent breast and colon cancer--all in a single seed!

But what makes flax so powerful? Flaxseed contains high concentrations of alpha linoleic acid, a form of omega-3 fatty acids, which serve as the basic building blocks of cell walls. Additionally, flax is high in lignans, powerful antioxidants known for alleviating menopausal symptoms and fighting breast cancer. There are three forms of flaxseed, making it easy to incorporate into your diet.

FLAX OIL

While available in capsule form to be taken as a supplement, flax oil is best consumed as a food to get the most benefits from it. Many nutritionists often recommend purchasing the oil in small quantities, storing it in the refrigerator, and consuming a daily intake of two tablespoons. You can add a tablespoon to your morning smoothie or substitute flax oil in the vinaigrette dressing for your salad.

Flax oil breaks down to trans fats when heated, so it should never be used in cooking. While lower in lignans than other forms of flax, the oil is sometimes processed to preserve the lignans. Check the label for details.

FLAXSEEDS

Whole seeds are sure to have all the nutritional benefits of flax. Simply add these to your granola or salads for a nutty flavor. If a little tough on the teeth, grind them in a coffee grinder and sprinkle on foods. One note: raw, whole flaxseeds contain chemicals that can affect thyroid function. To get around this, simply toast the seeds in the oven for twenty minutes at 250 degrees, or limit your consumption of raw seeds to three to four tablespoons a day.

FLAX MEAL

Ground flax meal is another option to get the powerful nutritional value of flax. Add a tablespoon of it to your smoothies for extra fiber, or stir it into your oatmeal in the morning.

*Beauty is one of
the rare things
that do not lead
to doubt of God.*

-Jean Anouilh

The History of Brazilian Waxing

Nadiya Soto

Brazilian waxing is named for Brazil, the country with which it is most often associated. Waxing of the genital areas has been prevalent in many societies around the world for centuries, in Ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt but especially in desert, predominantly Muslim and Arab countries. Arab, Turkish, and Persian women as well as women from the Albanian culture and Mediterranean regions have for centuries been waxing in the genital areas. The waxes used were often sugar-based and made with lemon.

The reasons for genital waxing has not been for cosmetic purpose throughout history, as it is in the case on North and South America as well as Europe, these cultures generally practiced waxing for reasons of personal hygiene or religion. As a result, in many of these cultures, body hair of any sort on women is considered socially unacceptable. In the United States the habit of this type of waxing did not become commonplace until the late 1990s. The Brazilian wax was introduced to New Yorkers in 1987 when seven Brazilian sisters opened J. Sisters International Salon in Manhattan. And U.S. women's bikini lines were changed forever!

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