



RIGHT
PROCEDURE,
RIGHT
AGE

FLIRTY 30s

RIGHT WOMAN
NATALIE
PORTMAN, 32
A role model for women in their 30s, "Her skin is smooth and glowing and appears poreless. There is no evidence of brown sunspots, freckles or fine lines. Her cheek contours are still youthful and her lips are full," notes Dr. Gidon.

BY CATALINA MARGULIS

THE LOOK YOU WANT

To rekindle those days of flawless beauty you had in your 20s and that feeling of forever-young resilience when a day without makeup or skin care really made no difference to how you looked. Overall you were satisfied with the way your body looked since love handles and that unwanted tummy bulge were nonexistent.

THE REALITY

Let's face it, by your 30s, you've accumulated some telltale aging signs: sun damage, post-baby stretch marks, a varicose vein or two and even some unwanted weight gain—not enough to warrant a major overhaul but

enough to have you looking beyond the drugstore aisle. While experts agree there is no single procedure that applies to everyone in their 30s, there are some non-invasive procedures that are popular for people in this age group.

Sun damage effects, such as brown spots, redness and pore size, "start to show in your 30s and early intervention is more effective in keeping the signs under control," says Dr. Jaggi Rao, MD, FRCPC medical director of the Alberta Laser & Dermatology Centre.

As well, according to Dr. Martie Gidon, MD, FRCPC Cosmetic dermatologist with Gidon Aesthetics & MediSpa in Toronto, it's at this time that people start to notice crow's feet, frown lines and the loss of volume, especially around the mouth and lips and in the cheeks. Furthermore, the production of collagen slows down in the skin, causing a loss of elasticity and resulting in the beginning of wrinkles and sagging skin.

TREATMENT OPTIONS

INTENSE PULSED LIGHT THERAPY

According to Dr. Rao, Intense Pulsed Light Therapy (IPL) reduces the effects of sun damage. "IPL fades spider veins and freckles and helps stimulate collagen growth," adds Dr. Gidon.

During the procedure, a cold gel is applied to the skin and a bright light is absorbed by the red and brown discolourations in the skin, as well as collagen. "The discolourations fade, skin pigmentation is more even and collagen is stimulated," she says. The pulses of light feel like a small sting, and the procedure is well tolerated. "Red spots may bruise for about five days, and brown spots may become darker and flake off in about four days," she says.

"Skin should not be tanned before the procedure and sun should be avoided for at least three weeks after," says Dr. Gidon. "Usually five treatments, three weeks apart, are recommended."

Dr. Rao adds that caution should be taken to ensure that burning does not occur. "Darker-skinned individuals are more likely to burn, and special treatment precautions must take place to prevent this from happening."

COST: \$250 to \$500 per treatment, depending on the surface area.

NEUROMODULATOR INJECTABLES

Many people turn to neuromodulators such as Botox in their 30s to address early fine lines and loss of volume. Dr. Rao says that neuromodulators like Botox block impulses from the nerve to the tiny facial muscles that are responsible for the deep muscle pull creases. As the muscles relax, undesirable dynamic wrinkles gradually fade. During the treatment, a small amount of Botox is injected into the target muscle.

There is a slight burning sensation as the fluid enters the muscle, but no sedation or local anaesthetic is required. Normal activities can be resumed immediately. There is a small chance of bruising at the site of the injection, which will fade over the course of a week.

In most individuals the maximal effects take four to 10 days. Gradually, over two to six months, the Botox will wear off and muscle action returns. To maintain the desired effect, injections should be done two to four times a year.

COST: \$250 to \$500 per treatment for Botox, depending on the treatment area.

SOFT-TISSUE FILLERS

Soft-tissue fillers volumize the skin of the cheeks and nasolabial folds and enhance the lips, says Dr. Rao. Dr. Gidon adds that fillers like Juvéderm and Restylane are often used for lip enhancement in order to replace lost volume. Fillers are a modified form of hyaluronic acid, a naturally occurring substance found in the skin. When injected, soft-tissue fillers smooth away facial lines and wrinkles, acne scars or other skin contour deficiencies. Full effects are typically realized in about one to two days, and ongoing treatments are necessary to maintain the results, usually from six to 18 months. Strenuous activities are not recommended on the day of treatment, and minimal facial movement is recommended for four hours to allow the product to set properly. Mild bruising or swelling might appear at the injection site, and there may be some mild discomfort while the product is injected, however most fillers now contain numbing agents to increase comfort.

COST: \$500 to \$1,000 per treatment for either Juvéderm or Restylane, depending on the treatment area.

THERMAGE

Our faces are not the only body parts that betray our age as we get older. Fortunately, treatments like Thermage can tighten sagging skin. Thermage helps tighten skin on the face, eyelids, neck, abdomen, arms and thighs and also improves the quality of the skin, according to Dr. Gidon. "Thermage consists of radio frequency pulses that deliver heat to the dermis to tighten existing collagen and stimulate the production of new collagen," says Dr. Gidon. "With each pulse, patients experience a cold sensation, heat and then another cold sensation to protect the surface of the skin. Since multiple pulses are used, there is some discomfort with the procedure and most patients take oral analgesics prior to the treatment. The vibrating handpiece makes the treatment more comfortable." The treatment takes one to two hours, depending on the areas being treated, with no downtime. Improvements are seen by the first month, but it takes three to six months to see the full results. Effects can last up to two years.

COST: \$1,500 to \$3,000 per treatment. ©

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