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SCIENCE FOR SKIN

New high-tech treatments go beyond the facial to reveal your best skin

» BY KATIE COAKLEY

Living in the mountains is a privilege: the sun that shines 300 days a year, the mountains that we love to explore and the crisp, clean air are all things that we enjoy daily. However, these envy-inducing elements can also have a detrimental effect on our skin.

Preventative measures like wearing sunscreen daily and maintaining a cleansing and moisturizing regime are helpful, but going beyond the surface to repair your skin takes a little more science. Skincare has gone high-tech, with various treatments involving lasers, high intensity light, needles and even your own plasma. But before visions of Dr. Frankenstein start popping into your head, rest assured: These procedures are not as scary as they may sound. And the results? They can be almost miraculous.

MICRONEEDLING WITH PLATELET-RICH PLASMA
Perhaps one of the most intriguing new treatments is microneedling. Also known as “collagen induction therapy,” microneedling uses a device that has a concentration of small needles that puncture the skin after a topical numbing medicine is applied to the skin. The depth of penetration can be adjusted, depending on where the microneedling is being used. By penetrating the skin, you can stimulate collagen growth in the deeper layers of the skin, which can help reduce the appearance of wrinkles, acne scars and stretch marks as well as improving the texture of the skin and reducing pore size.

“Microneedling feels pretty similar to sandpaper being moved across the skin,” explains Montana Scott, a



Board-certified dermatologist Dr. Jean Urquhart now performs collagen induction therapy at Mountain Dermatology Specialists.

“YOU CAN TREAT DARK SKIN OR LIGHT SKIN, OILY OR DRY SKIN. WHETHER YOU’RE A 25-YEAR-OLD WITH BAD ACNE SCARRING OR A 75-YEAR-OLD WITH WRINKLES, OR ANYONE ELSE IN BETWEEN, WE CAN UTILIZE THIS TREATMENT TO HELP WITH IMPROVING THE APPEARANCE OF YOUR SKIN.” DR. JEAN URQUHART, MOUNTAIN DERMATOLOGY SPECIALISTS

“PERSONALLY, I NOTICED A RADIANT GLOW AND AN ALL-OVER MUCH SMOOTHER TEXTURE TO MY SKIN ABOUT A WEEK AFTER PROCEDURE.” MONTANA SCOTT, MOUNTAIN DERMATOLOGY SPECIALISTS

licensed medical aesthetician with Mountain Dermatology Specialists. “We apply topical numbing cream prior to the procedure, so no medications or anesthesia are necessary.”

But to boost results, it's the addition of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) that can make a difference.

“Platelet-rich plasma, or PRP, is a concentration of growth factors and nutrients extracted from a patient's own blood,” explains Dr. Jean Urquhart of Mountain Dermatology Specialists. “PRP can be used in the skin to stimulate collagen growth. Because PRP is extracted from a patient's own blood, you do not have to worry about allergic reactions.”

To harvest the PRP, a patient's blood is drawn into a special tube that helps separate PRP from other components of the blood. The blood is centrifuged and the PRP is extracted from the blood and then it is ready for use. The resulting PRP can be injected into or applied topically to the skin after the microneedling,

soaking into the minuscule holes to aid in reducing the appearance of wrinkles, scars and even stretch marks.

“With the microneedling creating micro channels, it gives the PRP the opportunity to reach deeper layers of the skin for optimal absorption,” Scott says. “PRP also generates five times the collagen production using growth factors and your body's own protein and nutrients.”

PRP can be injected into the skin without the microneedling procedure, and microneedling does not have to include PRP, but Dr. Urquhart says that studies have shown that the most effective treatment incorporates both aspects.

RESURFACE YOUR SKIN

This treatment may sound like a last resort, but Dr. Urquhart said that's not the case: Almost everyone is a candidate for microneedling with PRP.

“It's for all ages and all skin types,” Dr. Urquhart said. “You can treat dark skin or light skin, oily or dry skin. Whether you're a 25-year-old with bad acne scarring or a 75-year-old with wrinkles, or anyone else in between, we can utilize this treatment to help with improving the appearance of your skin.”

While you will see results after one treatment, Dr. Urquhart recommends at least three treatments spaced four to six weeks apart for maximum results.

“Personally, I noticed a radiant glow and an all-over much smoother texture to my skin about a week after procedure,” Scott says. “Most people can expect to see results one to two weeks after the procedure and can continue for up to 6 months.”

The techniques for erasing wrinkles and acne scars will continue to evolve as the desire to fix the ravages of the elements of time and nature. Microneedling with PRP is one of the latest options that deliver noticeable results. And if all it takes is some of my own blood and a few needles? I'm in.



Aestheticians Montana Scott and Jena Holt offer a variety of skincare treatments.

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