



# Easy Lifting

The latest and greatest in noninvasive, no-scalpels-required, face-rejuvenating techniques.

By Katie O'Reilly

**Hold the anesthesia!** So says the aging client of today. Indeed, consumers are turning away from traditional (read: invasive) face-lifts as they become increasingly aware of the potential for long-term side effects associated with such procedures. Others don't want to deal with post-operative downtime, not to mention the high costs involved.

Alas, there's still no such thing as a time machine. Telltale photodamage, with its attendant lines, wrinkles and hyperpigmentation, rears its head in our 20s and 30s. After 40, things get even more interesting, as gravity manifests in our slackening, sagging skin. From there, the dermis continues to lose precious collagen and elastin—those proteins that once lent our complexions that smooth, youthful appearance.

Now for the good news: more and more clients are seeking noninvasive yet highly effective alternatives to surgery, such as topical boosters and device-driven techniques. We're talking measures that don't require "going under" and that leave zero scar tissue but are stress-reducing, caringly performed rituals and consultations. The even better news? You can offer these services at your spa.

For a breakdown of nonsurgical esthetic options, we consulted with experts and created a cheat sheet of sorts. Keep in mind that the techniques listed here will benefit even those clients who *are* opting to get "work" done; today's cosmetic surgeons recommend topical skin care as an essential and integral way to maximize a face-lift's results.

So read on for ways to make *each* of your clients feel like a naturally youthful woman (or man)!

## TOPICAL PARADISE

In addition to delivering rapid results with no downtime, topicals, unlike surgical face-lifts, can improve skin's long-term health and surface texture. According to Dr. Charlene DeHaven, clinical director for Innovative Skincare (isclinical.com), today's formulas can actually improve the skin's metabolism and repair functions. "Topicals provide a source of nutritional building blocks, vitamins and co-factors that assist in treating aging skin," she says.

Let's start with "nature's Botox," aka **peptides**, those wonderful agents proven to smooth and relax the skin. Peptides are created from a blend of various amino acids, explains Dr. Dieter Kuster, founder of CA Botana (ca-botana.com). They send signals to skin cells, alerting them to produce more collagen. Adds Lydia Sarfati, founder of Repêchage (repechage.com), "As your skin becomes thinner, your body takes notice and produces natural peptides in an attempt to boost your collagen production. By applying products that contain collagen-boosting peptides, you can trick your skin into thinking collagen is diminishing and cause it to produce more!"

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Peptides also signal cells to help skin better withstand life's constant bombardment of UV rays, pollution and free radicals. "Peptides work on the cellular level to stimulate synthesis of more structural proteins, while also *reducing* degradation of collagen and elastin," notes Dr. Neal Kitchen, VP of strategy and development at HydroPeptide (hydropeptide.com).

And here's a bonus! Peptides mix well with botanical **stem cells**. "Blended with stem cells from Swiss apples, argan and comfrey roots, they stimulate and awaken clients' *own* lethargic stem cells, thereby densifying and firming the dermis," confirms Dr. Christian Jurist, medical director of education for Pevonia (pevoniapro.com).

Lifting and firming a face means it's necessary to regenerate tissue, and that requires stem cell activity. But as Candace Noonan, director of education at Environ (dermaconcepts.com), points out, "With age, our bodies' own stem cells lose viability, and reduce in number. That's where topical applications come in." Noonan adds that free-radical damage occurs "insidiously but continuously, over many years." It's therefore crucial to maintain a consistent topical **antioxidant** regime, she says.

Jurist agrees. "Antioxidants, especially **vitamin C**, are necessary for collagen-stimulating fibroblast activity," he says. "And combining vitamin C with **hyaluronic acid** is an especially smart way to soften lines and wrinkles by plumping skin." Chemically referred to as L-ascorbic acid, vitamin C also creates a radiant, youthful glow by improving uneven skin tone. DermAware (dermaware.com) founder Gül Zone notes that L-ascorbic acid isn't manufactured internally, and therefore *must* come from an outside source. "It's a co-enzyme in the production of collagen as well as a tyrosinase inhibitor," Zone says. "It combats hyperpigmentation while providing a lift."

According to Zone, topical applications of **vitamin A** do wonders to regulate cell turnover, boost internal moisture, and trigger collagen and elastin synthesis. She adds that vitamin A also protects the skin from oxidative stress, UV rays and pollution, increasing skin's cellular longevity.

**Seaweed** is a natural source of amino acids, minerals, vitamins B, C, E and K, beta carotene, biotin and folic acid—all of which help to lock moisture into the skin. "It's one of the richest sources of natural antioxidants," Sarfati says. "Seaweed is anti-inflammatory, it scavenges free radicals and also



Natural ingredients such as seaweed and stem cells derived from comfrey root and argan can help lift skin.



speeds up cell regeneration, helping to repair sun and environmental damage."

**Growth factors** are another power player in the world of topicals. "When our skin is young and frisky," Noonan explains, "it naturally releases these proteins that facilitate inter-skin-cell communication about immune responses, UV levels, etc. As we age, the efficacy of these growth factors diminishes, but their topical application can improve key functions such as collagen synthesis."

Keep in mind, we're living in a golden age of topical blends. Alexis Mayne, director of research and development at Sanitas (sanitas-skincare.com), reports that

today's hybrid formulas combine multiple technologies into one ingredient. She cites brand examples such as "Neodermyl®, a 'needle-free filler', which targets fibroblasts, and boosts collagen and elastin, and Brighlette™, a topical brightening active that utilizes marine extracts to target melanocyte activation *and* melanin transfer."

Whatever you use, make sure clients understand that topicals require persistence. "To reap results," reminds Kuster, "they must apply the product(s) recommended by their skincare consultant once or twice daily."

## FIRE IT UP

Experts agree that the best way to enhance the benefits of those topicals discussed above is with the use of equipment that can boost their penetration into the skin via specific technologies:

**Microcurrent** generates small amounts of pulsated electricity that mirrors the body's natural current. This stimulates facial muscles, thereby firming, lifting and toning them. Microcurrent also helps to boost blood and lymph flow, and to increase activity in cells' mitochondria—those little engines that produce ATP, a substance that enables cells to produce more collagen and elastin.

**Radio frequency** waves are typically delivered via an electrode that produces localized heat injury within the dermal and subdermal layers, as well as collagen contraction—all of which leads to tightened skin.

**Electroporation, or electro-ionization,** generates an electrical current that opens a pathway into the skin, allowing for deeper product penetration.

**Microneedling** facilitates the penetration of antiaging ingredients deep into the skin, by creating invisible micro-perforations. Although the experience is painless for the client, it causes the skin to shift its natural repair mechanisms into gear—and begin to produce reparative collagen and elastin.



Radio frequency works to tighten skin.



## THE POWER'S IN YOUR HANDS

A massage a day keeps the cosmetic surgeon away! To help tone facial muscles, tighten loose skin, brighten the complexion and even slim the face, many spa pros incorporate 5- or 10-step **facial massage** protocols into their esthetic services.

Some take things further by manipulating clients' **acupressure points**. Acupressure is known to improve metabolism and blood circulation, and some experts say certain acupressure points can unlock doors to youthful complexions, reducing wrinkles and tightening the dermis. For instance, massaging the "third eye" point, located between the eyebrows, is thought to stimulate the pituitary gland and help enhance cell regeneration.

**Facial acupuncture** calls on hair-thin needles to be inserted into specific points on the face, to facilitate the movement of blood and stimulate collagen production. It's believed to nourish, rehydrate, tone, and reduce the appearance of facial wrinkles, as well as improve skin's overall elasticity.

**Mesotherapy**, whereby tiny injections pierce the dermis while leaving the epidermal layer relatively intact, works by causing micro-trauma to the area; in response, blood is sent to the area for healing. Repeated needling sessions gradually build new collagen to fill in the treated area. "It's very helpful for scars, deep wrinkles, discoloration and other imperfections," explains Elina Fedotova, founder of Elina Organics (elinaorganics.com), who offers this service at her skincare clinics in Chicago and Kalamazoo, Michigan. "Because mesotherapy helps deliver facial serums and masks deeper into the skin, it's important that these solutions be safe—practically edible," she explains. "That's why I only use natural herbal extracts, vitamins and other food-grade nutrients in my practice."

**No-needle mesotherapy**, a blend of microcurrent, radio frequency and electroporation, is another form of mesotherapy that works to reduce the appearance of wrinkles and jowls and tighten skin.

**Temperature-based therapies** include **thermal energy**, believed to warm skin's inner layers, thus promoting blood and lymph circulation, and **cryotherapy**,

helpful for locking in skin's natural moisture, and in speeding the recovery of wounded epidermal cells.

**Light therapy**, specifically red LED, reduces fine lines and wrinkles, and **microphototherapy** harnesses light *and* thermal energy to foster a mild thermal injury beneath the skin's surface, leading to fibroblast production and

## Nonsurgical Face-lift Devices

Check out this list of estheticians' favorite facial equipment.

- Allied Beauty Experts/New Image Industries, Quantum Electro Ionization unit ([alliedprofessionals.net](http://alliedprofessionals.net))
- BHC Int'l. USA & SoundSkin, Smart Peel Diamond Skin Exfoliation System ([smartpeelmicrodermabrasion.com](http://smartpeelmicrodermabrasion.com))
- Bio Jouvance Paris, Radio Frequency ([biojouvance.com](http://biojouvance.com))
- BioPhotas, Inc. Celluma PRO Professional LED Panel ([biophotas.com](http://biophotas.com))
- Dermaglow, Dermaglow II microdermabrasion machine ([dermaglow.com](http://dermaglow.com))
- DermaMed Solutions, Mega Peel EX ([dermamedsolutions.com](http://dermamedsolutions.com))
- ECHO<sub>2</sub>Plus, ECHO<sub>2</sub>Plus Oxygen Concentrator ([echo2plus.com](http://echo2plus.com))
- EndyMed, Intensif RF Microneedle Handpiece ([endymed.com](http://endymed.com))
- Quasar Bio-Tech Inc., Quasar MD Plus ([babyquasar.com](http://babyquasar.com))
- SAIAN, Skin Pro 2 System ([saian.net](http://saian.net))
- Silhouet-Tone, Vortex Peel Crystal Microdermabrasion System ([silhouettone.us](http://silhouettone.us))
- Skin Care Consultants, Lamprobe ([lamskin.com](http://lamskin.com))

thus, new collagen formation.

**Ultrasound** devices use waves of more than 20,000 vibrations per second to exfoliate and extract, and help product penetrate. The ultrasonic wave also stimulates the cells, producing an internal, massage-type action, inducing vibration within cells' nuclei, improving cell metabolism and regeneration. ■

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*For a slideshow of companies' star skin lifting products, go to [dayspamagazine.com](http://dayspamagazine.com).*