There’s a new trend in anti-ageing treatments – forget the scalpel and drastic change; it’s all about gradual transformation

BY SARAH MURRAY

Where once the scalpel was the only way to radically reverse the signs of ageing (for those able to afford it), there’s now a new raft of non-surgical procedures that are bucking the trend. Dr Sarah Hart from the Skin Institute says the popularity of these options has a lot to do with convenience and affordability. “Non-surgical treatments are easier, safer and, most importantly, they work,” she says. “Added to that a walk-in, walk-out lunchtime procedure is better suited to today’s busy woman.” Another benefit is that non-surgical treatments give a more gradual transformation over the years, meaning they will age well as you do. “Most women prefer this to a sudden change, as they may want to keep their treatment on the down-low,” she says. We look into the latest treatments that will keep you looking younger and fresher, for longer.

THE PROBLEM: A drooping face
THE SOLUTION: The 8-point lift

Created by world-famous Brazilian plastic surgeon Mauricio de Maio, this highly specialised technique works to restore volume in eight strategic areas of the face. The aim is to give maximal lift and support with a small amount of dermal fillers. As we age, certain areas of our face lose volume, and this treatment targets those key areas. It’s different for each person; however, the procedure includes areas such as the cheekbones, the tear trough (the hollows under your eyes), the nasolabial fold (smile or laugh lines), the corners of the mouth, jowls, jawline and lower cheek.

Pain level: Discomfort is usually brief as most new generation dermal fillers contain a local anaesthetic for numbing.
Results: You can see the results instantly and they should last for 12-18 months. After your appointment you can go straight back to work. However, some people may have swelling, redness or bruising.

From $950-2400.
Who to see: Dr Catherine Stone at The Face Place.

‘Non-surgical treatments are easier, safer and, most importantly, they work’
THE PROBLEM: Dull skin
THE SOLUTION: Meso rejuvenation
A high-tech injector is used to administer injectable treatments such as PRP (platelet rich plasma, which uses the healing properties of the platelets from your blood) to stimulate cellular rejuvenation. The injector looks like a James Bond gun with a tiny needle, which almost painlessly places product precisely and very quickly into the top layers of the skin. PRP with hydrating hyaluronic acid (HA) or Botox with HA can also be injected into the very superficial layer of the skin to improve brightness, tone, texture, and reduce hair loss.

Pain level: Discomfort is very minimal, if at all. And you know it can’t be too bad when there is no numbing cream required.

Results: Post-treatment there can be a little redness, which should settle after 24 hours. After a week your skin should be rejuvenated and glowing.

Price: Overseas they’re paying upwards of $1000.

Who to see: Registered nurses Marilou Bobis, and Marjorie Dee at The Face Place.

THE PROBLEM: Sagging brows
THE SOLUTION: Threads
Originally developed in Russia, this is probably the closest procedure to actual surgery you can get. Known as ‘the natural face-lift’, this uses biodegradable threads (the same kind that are used for dissolvable stitches) to lift the face. If you’ve been thinking about Botox but haven’t liked the idea of possibly having limited mobility in your expressions then this could be for you. So how exactly does it work? Similar to how you would think. The threads are inserted with a very fine needle under your skin and then pulled tight. The threads take around nine to 11 months to dissolve, which creates some scar tissue under the skin. This is the type of scar tissue you want to achieve because it stimulates the production of collagen, and therefore helps you look younger for longer.

Pain level: The procedure is performed under local anaesthetic and rated as uncomfortable as opposed to painful – though some people may opt to have mild sedation. You will have swelling for a couple of days afterwards, and even some bruising.

Results: Your eyes and brows are lifted, without the paralysed look Botox gives you. By the time the threads are completely absorbed by your body, your face will feel plumper and thicker, while eye drooping is reduced.

Price: $2000-5000

Who to see: Dr Pier Marzinotto at the Skin Institute.

THE PROBLEM: Jowls, turkey neck, crepey décolletage
THE SOLUTION: Ultralift
It isn’t available in New Zealand yet but Ultralift is an excellent alternative to the facelift. ‘This procedure was originally introduced in South Korea, and it is now in some of the busiest cities in the world. The machine uses warm pulses of ultrasound energy, which will not only lift the skin, but also delve deep into the muscle to stimulate the deep structural layers of the skin.

Pain level: Like most treatments, it’s said to be uncomfortable – and some parts of the face can be more sensitive than others. However, a full face only takes 20 minutes so you don’t have to grin and bear it for too long.

Results: The gentle heat will in turn stimulate the growth of new collagen and over time work to strengthen your skin from within – making it firmer, tighter and brighter. Previously only a surgical facelift could achieve these results, which is probably why all the most well-known supermodels are big fans.

Price: Overseas they’re paying upwards of $1000.
The beauty of this treatment is it's a non-surgical alternative to liposuction and works on extremely stubborn areas of fat.

**THE PROBLEM:** Thin lips

**THE SOLUTION:** Diamond lip treatment

This procedure is not yet available on our shores, but due to the popularity of bigger lips you might not have to wait long. Lip fillers have been a much-sought-after treatment for many years now; however, what many women neglect is the puckered lines around the lip. This treatment has a two-pronged approach; a hyaluronic acid filler is injected to plump up the lips and add volume, and then a mesotherapy gun (which is also used in the meso rejuvenation procedure) is used to smooth deeper lines around the mouth.

**Pain level:** The filler has an anesthetic, which makes it feel more like a pinch than a prick. Thankfully the mesotherapy gun is almost painless too.

**Results:** Your lips will look a little bee-stung afterwards (more so than you'd planned). By the next day, when the swelling has gone down, you'll have a fuller, wrinkle-free pout that lasts about a year.

**Price:** Overseas they're paying $1000 plus.

**THE PROBLEM:** Aged hands

**THE SOLUTION:** Hand booster lift

Hands are a real giveaway when it comes to showing your age – but now thankfully there's a procedure to help you get rid of those brown age spots and achieve smoother skin. First, IPL (intense pulsed light) is used to help diminish the appearance of brown spots. Next, a dermal filler made of hyaluronic acid is injected to plump up the lost volume on the hands – this also reduces the appearance of prominent veins.

**Pain level:** IPL feels like a hot rubber band getting flicked onto your skin, so it’s warm and uncomfortable. And with the dermal filler – as with all injections – you feel a prick but you can always ask to be prepped with some numbing creams.

**Results:** Your hands will be red and tender for a few days and the age or pigmentation spots will go darker before they eventually fade away. The filler will disguise the ‘veiny’ look of hands and improve hydration of the skin.

**Price:** $1000-$2000 depending on severity of age spots and volume loss.

**Who to see:** Dr Sarah Hart at the Skin Institute.

**THE PROBLEM:** Saddlebags

**THE SOLUTION:** Coolsculpting

This non-surgical treatment has taken off around the world and many clinics have variations of it. In New Zealand there is a procedure called ChillSculpt, which uses cryolipolysis – a technology that works to cool and freeze fat cells. Targeted fat cells then gradually disappear through the body’s normal metabolic process (when you go to the loo). The beauty of this treatment is it’s non-surgical alternative to liposuction, and works on extremely stubborn areas of fat like just below your bottom, tummy, and back. But remember it won’t make you lose weight, just help to get rid of fat areas that won’t budge. The procedure is likened to a vacuum passing over the area with a sucking sensation that cools at the same time.

**Pain level:** It feels more strange and unusual than painful.

**Results:** After about four treatments you may be able to see some results; however, six to eight treatments are recommended.

**Price:** $450 for one treatment.

**Who to see:** The Caci Clinic.