

PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY

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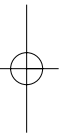
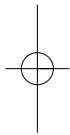
WISHING ON A STAR

THE ZEITGEIST OF
CELEBRITY POSTER GIRLS

LOOK
YOUNGER
IN JUST 10 MINUTES!

SMOOTH
OPERATORS
NEXT-GENERATION
LINE ERASERS

BEST IN
MOTHER'S
DAY SPA
TREATMENTS





| SMOOTHERS AND SHAPERS |

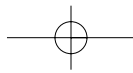
smooth operators

FIONA EMBLETON

A magic line eraser. Hardly a mandate to ignore when you consider the statistics: by the year 2009, women worldwide are expected to spend \$2.86 billion a year on anti-ageing creams. But can any face cream justify the price of a secondhand car?

Courtesy of Gatineau





| SMOOTHERS AND SHAPERS |

Science is still looking at ways to iron out – even prevent – wrinkles. But if you ask US anti-ageing expert Dr Neal Schultz, we have become so obsessed with losing the lines that luminous skin – the sort that speaks of a clever dermatologist and sensible diet – is fast-becoming something of an enigma.

“The issues that really matter are colour, texture and dryness. Tackle them and skin will already have a noticeable lift. Once skin is restored to its optimum glowing state, it’s easier to make a decision about whether future work is actually necessary,” he says.

What Botox, fillers and even face-lifts do – and, truthfully, do well – is defy gravity. However, what neither scalpel nor syringe can improve is the quality and texture of the skin itself. So imagine the benefits of a cream that paralyses muscles – albeit temporarily – while also layering skin with antioxidants and light-reflecting particles that blur the appearance of wrinkles. Not much to ask, then.

NEXT-GENERATION LINE FILLERS

Seminal moments in beauty are few and far between. So when Prescriptives was forced to airlift in supplies of its Magic Line Smoother from the US to meet demand, not only were we talking a new magic bullet, but never had one been so breathlessly mentioned as a must-have by beauty insiders.

Given its immediate results, it’s not hard to see why R&D has concentrated on perfecting line smoothers. Like its injectable counterpart, the dermal filler, line smoothers are purely cosmetic: dab into grooves for a daily fix of plumped up skin much as you would Polyfilla on cracked surfaces. Most also pack optical pigments that bounce light off skin, for instant luminosity – meaning it’s an out-and-out winner if you are in Dr Schultz’s camp.

In the last six months alone, straight-from-the-lab activity has exploded with gusto to ensure the successors of the Magic Line Smoother are right on cue. One of the pioneers of this skincare evolution is Gatineau. Together with Revlon, it has taken five years to create Melatogenine Futur Plus Advanced Anti-Ageing Cream, a true-to-life imitator of dermal fillers that capitalises on a unique ingredient currently injected into lips and cheeks by Restylane.

In fillers, a synthetic version of hyaluronic acid, a molecule found naturally in the body, is injected under a wrinkle to lift and smooth it. When used on the skin, researchers found it has a similar effect to other plumping ingredients, but hydrates more by holding 1000 times its own

weight in water. This allowed Gatineau to declare its formula, complete with wrinkle-filling spheres that inflate on contact with the skin, was the first step towards converting filler-happy addicts to a skincare alternative.

But the fruits of expensive research aren’t cheap – Gatineau’s one hit wonder costs £70, so understandably customers want to know that somewhere between science and hype lies the route to younger-looking skin.

Author of *Wrinkle-Free Forever* Dr Howard Murad, has taken up the theme, too – but with claims of clinical proof that he can increase skin firmness by up to 28% in just 10 minutes. Instead of the traditional vitamin cocktail, Murad’s Night Reform Treatment uses a significant dose of hyaluronic acid to strengthen skin’s barrier when you sleep – all of which makes it more receptive to nourishing ingredients.

Meanwhile, plastic surgeon Dr Frederic Brandt has been looking at how science and botanics can be fused into an effective anti-ageing line. Working with a protein derived from sweet peas and hyaluronic acid, Brandt has created Laser in a Bottle, a daily moisturiser that can tone skin to emulate – within reason – the effects of regular laser treatment.

BETTER THAN BOTOX?

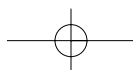
Time was, face creams fought the signs of ageing with moisture alone. Now, alongside ever more sophisticated ingredients and carriers, the bar has lifted for this humble skincare staple: creams must visibly relax lines and freeze the muscles that cause frowns.

Such is the interest in Botox-like ingredients, it was only a matter of time before a skincare company milked the cash cow by collaborating with Allergan (maker of Botox muscle-paralysing injections). And in 2005, Elizabeth Arden pipped others to the post when, together with Allergan, it launched Prevenge, an antioxidant serum that claims to “correct and protect” against premature ageing symptoms caused by stress, sun and pollution.

First sold exclusively through dermatologists in the US under the name Prevenge MD, it became one of the most successful launches of the last five years, rumoured to have grossed sales of \$8.5 million in little over six months. The draw? The Arden/Allergan formula – albeit subtly re-worked for the purposes of mass distribution on the beauty market – is based around the ingredient idebenone, currently the gold standard for antioxidants.

According to Dr Patrick Bowler, head of the British Association of Cosmetic Doctors, “idebenone is the most powerful antioxidant

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that we have. It is formulated to be absorbed deep into the skin's layers, where it gets to work preventing and correcting damage."

By virtue of an EPF (Environmental Protection Factor), similar to an SPF, which rates its antioxidant power as 95 out of a possible 100, Prevege can claim a reduction in fine lines within two months and improved skin tone in less than six weeks.

Other companies are taking a similar path by increasing their spending power on research into peptides – in particular, neuro-peptides. Similar to strings of amino acids that exist naturally in the body, neuro-peptides are responsible for the cell to cell communication system in our body, allegedly helping muscles to break the habit of frowning if treated properly.

Enthusiasts hail the NV Perricone line, comprising topical neuro-peptides, as nothing short of miraculous, despite costing the sort of money that would buy you a new Burberry handbag.

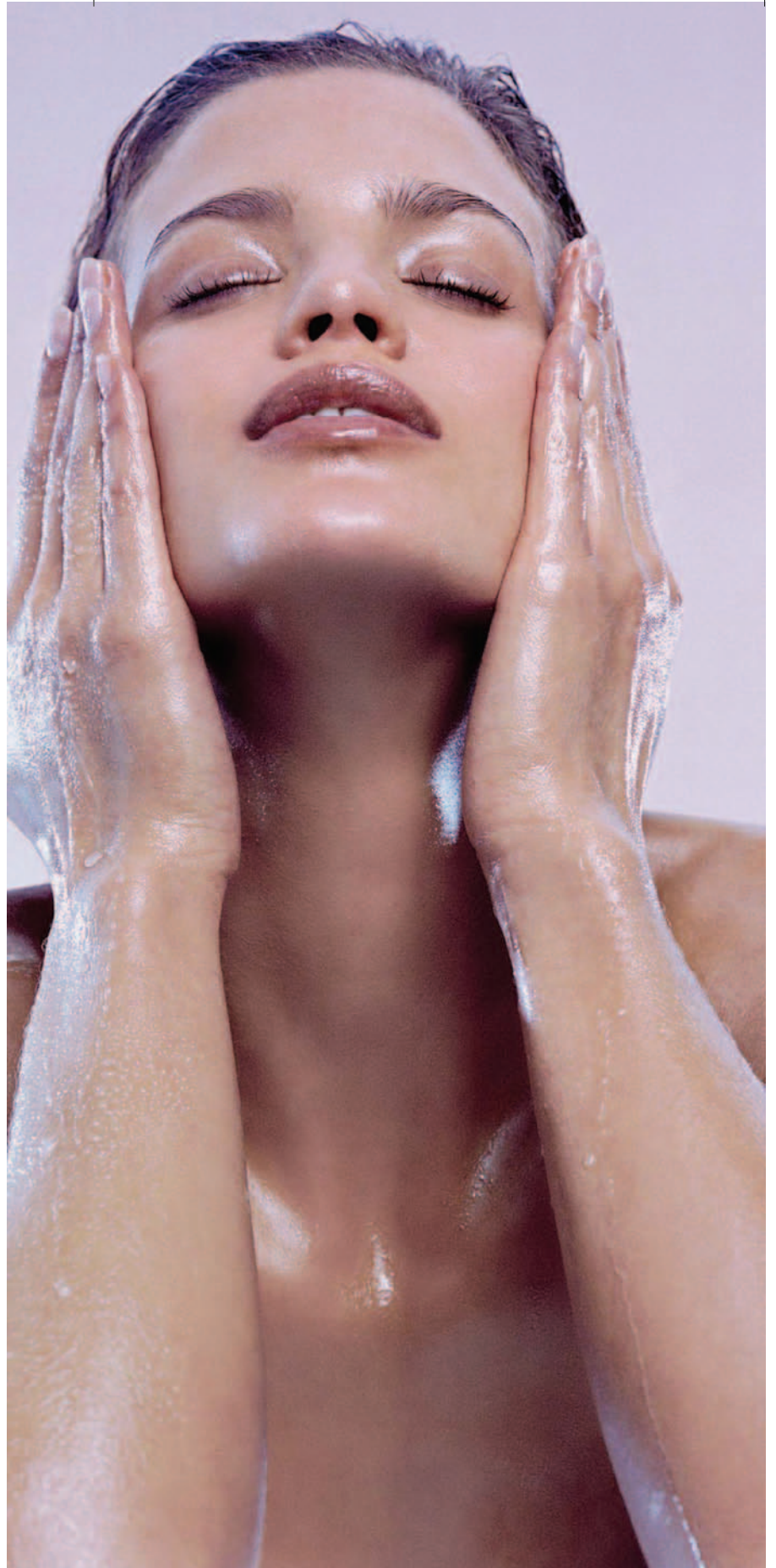
"When these peptides deliver their message, they cause a change in biological activity that can result in increased cellular repair. However, as we get older, our natural levels of neuro-peptides diminish, thus communication throughout the body and our ability to regenerate our cells slows down," says Dr Nicholas Perricone M.D.

As for the Neuropeptide Facial Conformer, which packs 41 different neuro-peptides, Dr Perricone promises visible results – everything from increased radiance and firmness to a dramatic decrease in wrinkles – within minutes of application.

There has also been an evolution in topical muscle-relaxants – from the industry standard argireline to an anti-wrinkle octapeptide, the cosmeceutical brand Medik8 has trademarked Infin8 for use in its new Pretox Infin8-TP cream. According to Medik8's medical director Elliot Isaacs, "dermatologists who have tried this product are amazed by its powerful antioxidant properties and ability to increase collagen and elastin production for less apparent wrinkles."

Meanwhile, cult US range Freeze 24/7 cites the benefits of a synthetic version of the body's natural muscle relaxant GABA (gamma aminobutyric acid). In a bid to reach the increasing number of under-30s resorting to Botox as a means of wrinkle prevention rather than cure, it has packaged its cream with a hip Benefit-style logo and easy-to-use instructions for nervous first-time users.

Used daily, they claim to give an almost professional result.



“Dermatologists who have tried this product are amazed by its powerful antioxidant properties.”

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HOT PROPERTY FACELIFTS IN A JAR

"Seven years before gravity takes effect, we are already suffering the effects of lost volume – that's the real anatomy of ageing," says cosmetic surgeon Rajiv Grover, who predicts we will fall for facial rejuvenation – whether of the surgical or skincare variety – in a big way this year.

One of the greatest beauty fallacies is that a facelift tackles wrinkles as it stretches and lifts. Not so, says Wendy Lewis, cosmetic surgery consultant and author of *The Lowdown on Facelifts & Other Wrinkle Remedies*.

"The end result of a facelift that has been carried out on old-looking, wrinkled and dry skin is a lifted face with tighter old-looking, wrinkled and dry skin. Surgical intervention will only redrape the crêpey skin of the face and neck, which will go quite far to reduce your double chins and turkey neck, but you will still have your wrinkles."

Consequently, anti-ageing creams are currently enjoying a renaissance in nip/tuck circles as even the most steadfast surgery supporters are united in the belief that healthy skin means a better facelift. In terms of the formulas, these are also more sophisticated – hence the fashionable epithet "facelift in a jar".

Réville, the line created by American plastic surgeon Dr Gregory Abys Brown, was one of the first to do research into EGFs (Epidermal Growth Factors), insulin-like proteins used to stimulate wound healing. When used on wrinkles, they help to reverse the signs of ageing and increase skin radiance through rapid cell regeneration.

Now the dermatologist created brand, DDF, is one step away from science fiction with its ingenious \$1000 (£570) RMX Maximum elixir. Not only does it sound high-tech but it looks the part, too: a white van delivers 28 vials of growth factor formula, steaming with dry ice, to your front door.

WEIRD SCIENCE

Crucially, looking younger is about self-preservation in more ways than one. And skincare companies would be the first to champion this universal truth. But if the smorgasbord of surgical alternatives really did what it says on the tin, then we would be talking drug classifications, right?

SKIN SMOOTHERS *The superhero* Top 5

Gatineau Melatogenine Futur Plus Advanced Anti-Ageing Cream, £70, boasts some of the most high-tech ingredients on the current beauty scene: serilesine, a peptide that firms; melatogenine, a molecule that softens cells in danger of drying up with age; and wrinkle-filling spheres containing hyaluronic acid.

☎ 01753 827600

Dr Murad Night Reform Treatment, £45, strengthens the barrier function, improves elasticity and gently exfoliates to reveal softer, smoother skin overnight.

☎ 0207 380 1677

Prevage, £125, with antioxidant idebenone, minimises the appearance of ageing caused by sun, stress and pollution.

☎ 0870 850 6655

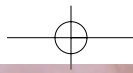
By reintroducing neuropeptides to the body, **NV Perricone** Neuropeptide Facial Conformer, £445, encourages it to use its own repair system to look younger.

☎ 0800 783 2583

Perfect as a pre-surgical treatment, **Réville** Intensité Volumising Serum, £370, contains powerful growth factor proteins to boost facial volume and impart a more dewy texture to skin.

☎ 020 8740 2085





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"The real point here is that currently no single cream fills, lifts and paralyzes muscles," warns cosmetic surgeon Dr Lawrence Kirwan. "Results like these can only be achieved by a combination of injectables and medical ingredients. While anti-ageing creams continue to be valuable, after your mid-forties, surgery plays an essential role because it becomes economically impractical to continue with alternatives: the results become less satisfactory as the signs of ageing become more apparent." While detractors argue that many anti-ageing products overstate their results, some scientists say others actually undersell what they can achieve to remain within the cosmetics market.

Hence, the raging debate among dermatologists, cosmetic companies and regulatory agencies regarding the role of cosmeceuticals – products that are a cross between a drug and a cosmetic.

"One thing remains certain," says Wendy Lewis. "Today's serious skincare buyers are decidedly sceptical about the effectiveness of over-the-counter wrinkle creams without hard evidence to convince us to buy."

So for brands that can claim a 60 per cent reduction in wrinkles, paying for science instead of lip service to pure snake oil could well be worth it – even if it means sacrificing the Mini and Manolos to walk to the counter. **PB**

