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quick fix

When it comes to beauty, the need for instant gratification doesn't end with your daily skin-care routine. Look years younger with this crop of fast-acting cosmetic procedures, at-home treatments and skin-care products.

TEXT ANDREA KARR

When cosmetic treatments first hit the mainstream in the early 2000s, repeat visits to the dermatologist's office (with weeks of downtime in between) were standard procedure. In today's busy world, ain't nobody got time for that! Fast-forward to 2018 and "there's a trend toward fewer treatments," says Victoria-based dermatologist Dr. Mark Lupin. "Everything used to take three to six sessions; now, it's more like one or two." The same applies to at-home skin care; no one wants to wait months to reap the benefits promised on the label. We want results and we want them now. Here, we break down the best treatments and products for noticeable improvement, stat!

Power Players

WITH A FEW QUICK PRICKS FROM A NEEDLE OR A CANNULA, IT'S EASY TO TREAT FINE LINES, ADD VOLUME OR INCREASE HYDRATION.

Neuromodulators

We've all heard of Botox, the brand name for an injectable used to treat expression lines such as crow's-feet, forehead wrinkles or frown lines between the eyebrows (sometimes called "the 11s"). By blocking communication between a facial muscle and the connected nerves, neuromodulators, like Botox, fully or partially freeze the muscle to diminish lines that create a tired or stern appearance—and they can also prevent lines from forming in the future.

PAIN LEVEL: 1/10
DOWNTIME: None
TIMELINE: Results take a week or two to reach full effect and last four to six months.
COST: \$400 and up

Hyaluronic Acid Fillers

Juvéderm, Restylane and Teosyal are gel injectables that plump lines and folds, as well as increase volume, with hyaluronic acid, a sugar molecule that occurs naturally in the skin. For an instant anti-aging effect, most people benefit from filling

the lateral cheeks (an outer region of the cheek)—one of the first areas to lose volume as we age.

PAIN LEVEL: 3/10
DOWNTIME: Possible minor bruising or swelling
TIMELINE: Results are immediate and last 12 to 18 months.
COST: \$600 and up

Skin-Boosters

Skin-boosting injectables such as Juvéderm Volite, Teosyal Redensity I and Restylane Skinboosters use low-viscosity hyaluronic acid to "draw water into the skin and improve its appearance, elasticity and smoothness," says Toronto-based dermatologist Dr. Lisa Kellett. By using a thin layer of hyaluronic acid over a wide area, your injector can make the skin appear smooth and hydrated while softening fine lines above the lip and on the cheeks, neck, décolleté and hands. This treatment won't add volume but will improve skin's texture.

PAIN LEVEL: 2/10
DOWNTIME: Possible minor bruising or swelling
TIMELINE: Results last up to a year after three treatments.
COST: \$800 and up per treatment

Surface Work

FOR TREATMENT OF TEXTURE, BROWN SPOTS AND SAGGING SKIN, YOUR BEST BET IS ONE OF THESE DERM-APPROVED DEVICES.

Laser Resurfacers

Those looking to improve skin's texture can choose from a wide variety of lasers, both ablative (which remove thin layers of the skin) and nonablative (which leave the skin's protective top layers intact). Clear + Brilliant, a nonablative laser, is one of the most popular treatments at Dr. Lupin's practice. "It helps treat sun damage and improves the health and look of the skin," he says. "It makes the skin stronger, not weaker, and minimizes pores and fine lines with no real downtime."

PAIN LEVEL: 3/10. Arrive early to apply numbing cream.
DOWNTIME: Minor redness or flaking for about a week
TIMELINE: Your skin will glow in one week, but you will see best results after three treatments, each spaced three weeks apart.
COST: \$300 per session

Colour-Correcting Lasers

If sun and age spots are dulling your complexion, or you've simply lost the even tone you once had, consider trying a picosecond laser, like PicoSure or Pico Genesis. These tools blast hyperpigmentation into small particles,

which are then eliminated by the body's natural processes.

PAIN LEVEL: 2/10
DOWNTIME: Minor swelling and redness for a day or two
TIMELINE: After one or two sessions, brown pigmentation is destroyed for good, though you'll need to wear sunscreen daily to help prevent new brown spots.
COST: \$350 and up per session

Tighteners

To firm up sagging skin nonsurgically, a practitioner will use high levels of heat to target beneath the epidermis into the deeper dermis and subdermis. This is typically performed via Thermage, a radio-frequency device. "When you produce heat in the skin, you induce the formation of fibroblasts; these cells make collagen, which is a protein that promotes skin firmness and elasticity," says Dr. Kellett.

brush it off

FACIAL DRY BRUSHING IS THE LATEST CRAZE IN AT-HOME CARE.



PROVINCE APOTHECARY Daily Glow Facial Brush, \$52, provinceapothecary.com.

"Performing synergistic treatments back-to-back can provide even better results than doing each service separately."

TIME-SAVING PACKAGES

If you have several skin concerns and minimal free time, ask if your local medi-spa or clinic offers a package of same-day treatments. "We'll perform synergistic treatments—like IPL [intense pulsed light], a diamond peel and a resurfacing treatment—back-to-back," says Dr. Kellett. "You can get even better results than doing each service separately."

For years, Province Apothecary skin-care specialists have used dry brushes during facials to move lymph fluid that causes skin to look dull and puffy. Now, you can obtain professional results at home by lightly brushing the surface of your face and neck with the brand's newly available ethically sourced, handcrafted goat-hair brush (visit provinceapothecary.com for the tutorial). You'll achieve a higher level of detoxification (meaning fewer breakouts), drain fluid and look brighter, says the brand's founder, Julie Clark. Just be sure to clean the brush every week or two with dry clay or cornstarch—and never, ever get it wet.

Manual Labour

ADD FACIAL MASSAGE TO YOUR REGIMEN FOR CHISELLED-LOOKING CHEEKS AND A SMOOTH, GLOWING COMPLEXION.

If the thought of injectables and lasers makes you squeamish, facial massage is an all-natural option worth adding to your anti-aging regimen. It sculpts the cheekbones, minimizes wrinkle-causing tension and increases blood circulation, cellular turnover and collagen production. Monthly visits to a highly trained facialist who can dedicate a full 20 to 30 minutes to massage is "the best-case scenario to see a sustained, visible difference," says Margaret de Heinrich de Omorovicza, cofounder of skin-care line Omorovicza. "It is an art, in many cases, and takes practice."

That said, performing a daily or weekly facial massage at home will also promote blood flow and improve the effectiveness of masks, serums and moisturizers—and you don't have to take more than two minutes to do it. Julie Clark, the founder of Canadian skin-care brand Province Apothecary, cleanses, tones and massages her face while she watches TV or makes coffee. To massage your own skin, she suggests choosing a product with good slip, like an oil serum, then performing the following four steps.

- 1 Applying firm pressure with your fingertips, draw horizontal spirals across your entire forehead.
- 2 Increase pressure and use two fingers to draw semicircles on your forehead and between your eyebrows. The area should become a little red.
- 3 Using an eye serum or cream, gently trace circles around your eyes, moving in toward the nose, then up and out to the outer corners of the eyebrows.
- 4 Pinch along the eyebrows, starting from the inner brow and moving outward.