

Secrets of ageing gracefully

You may have a youthful face and a trim figure but your hands and neck can tell a different story. **BONNIE ESTRIDGE** finds out how to take years off your looks



Picture: CORBIS / WENN

SURGICAL SOLUTIONS: GO FOR GOLD

A SKIN rejuvenation treatment that can be carried out on any part of the body including the hands and neck is the gold thread lift.

The patient is given multiple injections of local anaesthetic in the area to be treated and the doctor gets to work with a 1mm gauge needle.

GP Dr Alexandra Chambers, who has a Harley Street clinic, has 10 years experience of carrying out the procedure in Russia and France and explains that a tiny thread of 24 carat gold is inserted just under the surface of the skin.

This stimulates increased production of the skin's support structure - collagen and fibroblasts - around the gold in response to the presence of a foreign substance.

"New blood vessels appear when the healthy tissue begins to grow and this means the blood supply to the treated areas is increased, all of which should result in the skin becoming rejuvenated as it is firmer and thicker," he says.

"Initial swelling disappears within a few days and a difference in skin texture can be seen in 10 days and will continue to improve, with optimum results at three months.

"Over five to 10 years, the fine gold sutures gradually become fragmented as they are broken down naturally."

Cost: From £1,800
Contact: 0845 658 8540/
www.dralexchambers.co.uk

GET SMOOTH

NOBODY can deny that Madonna looks fabulous at 50 but the bulging veins on her hands give her age away. According to vascular surgeon Josh Derodra of the London Day Surgery Centre, she's an ideal candidate for a pioneering new treatment to remove those telltale signs of ageing.

"For purely cosmetic reasons, it is possible to remove these veins without causing any long-term consequences to the venous circulation of the hands," he says.

A local anaesthetic is injected around the elbow to numb the hand area. A tiny needle is used to make punctures in the skin and the veins are teased and plucked out. This is a similar procedure to varicose vein

removal and takes around 40 minutes for one hand. "Stitches are not needed but the hand is put in a compression glove for three weeks to support the area and reduce swelling," he says.

Only one hand can be done at a time but once everything has healed up - which takes about two to three months - the other can be done.

Cost: £1,850 per hand
Contact: 020 8445 1199/
www.ldsc.co.uk

GET A LIFT

THE ultimate anti-ageing treatment for a sagging neck is known as a platysmaplasty. The surgeon lifts the neck by tightening the platysma muscle, which extends from the lower jawbone all the way to the collarbone and spreads like a sheet over the deep tissues and bony structure of the neck. The skin is pulled up and the excess trimmed.

It is often done in conjunction with a facelift or liposuction. Scars are minimal as they are under and behind each ear lobe.

Cost: £7,500
Contact: 020 7487 4454/
www.janstanek.com

JUST RELAX

INJECTING Botox into the neck muscles can remove that stringy look. Botox is a purified, diluted version of the botulinum type A toxin and works by inhibiting the release of certain chemicals at the junction between a nerve and a muscle, so the message for the muscle to work is blocked and it therefore relaxes. It lasts between four to six months.

Cost: From £300
Contact: 0870 458 5483/
www.glanceymedical.co.uk

NON INVASIVE OPTIONS:

A LIGHT TOUCH

INTENSE pulsed light (IPL) therapy is a non-invasive resurfacing technique and the most effective way to remove freckling and uneven pigmentation.

GP Peter Crouch recommends the latest IPL Lumenis One system to patients who complain about unwanted blemishes on their hands or neck. "The aim of treatment is to use light to break up the unwanted pigment without doing any harm to surrounding skin," he says. "Lumenis

One involves placing a thumbprint-sized treatment head containing a super-cooled crystal on to the skin.

"It's virtually painless. There's no downtime or expensive commitment. The unwanted brown spots simply 'rub off' after a few days."

Cost: £100 for 30 minutes
Contact: www.lumenis.com

PLUMP IT UP

COSMETIC doctor Lucy Glancey uses a long-lasting filler called Radiesse to plump up hands that

have lost fat over the years. "Patients often ask for Restylane, a popular filler with hyaluronic acid but it only lasts around four months," she says. "Radiesse is a newer type of filler containing calcium hydroxylapatite, which is used medically and also for dental augmentation.

"I prefer it for hands because the effects last up to 18 months and you need only one treatment in that time."

Cost: £450
Contact: 0870 4585 483/
www.glanceymedical.co.uk

TONING TREATMENT

SINCE it was introduced to the UK a few years ago, Accent has become a popular treatment for tightening loose skin on the neck.

It is a handheld machine that is shaped like a small hairdryer that works with two radio frequencies. One is used to heat up the skin's surface and another to penetrate the tissue under the skin, stimulating the production of new collagen. It is claimed to improve local circulation and promote the breakdown of



VITAL: Pay attention to the neck



GIVEAWAY: Madonna's veiny hands

fibrous tissues. The tightening effect is cumulative and at least three treatments are needed.

Cost: From £350
Contact: 0845 170 7788

PEEL BACK THE YEARS

THE strangely-named Idebenone is a celebrity favourite and the latest ingredient to be used for peeling the skin as an alternative to glycolic or fruit acid peels. This super-antioxidant was originally used to preserve organs in transplants when it was discovered to have properties that repair and regenerate the skin.

Priori Idebenone Professional Peel gently peels the outer layers of skin and brown spots should have faded effectively after three sessions.

Cost: £65 per treatment
Contact: 0845 555 5050/
www.courthouseclinics.com

TAKE A BREAK

A COURSE of six relaxing, 30-minute sessions spent with an anti-ageing masque on your neck, face and décolletage can bring results.

Priori CoffeeBerry Botanical Enzyme Masque is a 98 per cent natural treatment that uses the extract of the whole coffee fruit (as opposed to coffee bean extracts) - said to have three times more antioxidants than green tea. The results are a reduction in fine lines, wrinkles and a brighter more even skin tone.

Cost: £65 for 30 minutes
Contact: 0845 555 5050/
www.courthouseclinics.com

QUICK FIXES:

WAX LYRICAL

THE best way to pamper hands that are looking old, dry and wrinkly is by giving them a weekly paraffin therapy bath and the Beauty Tools

Professional Edition Wax Heater will do the job perfectly. Plug it in to heat and melt the wax before you put your hands into the basin. After 10 minutes, skin will look and feel baby soft and totally rejuvenated.

Cost: £82.75
Contact: 0800 130 3001/
www.justbeautifully.co.uk

CREAMY COMFORT

INVEST in some Gatineau 3D Lift For Throat and Décolleté. It's an excellent cream for crepey necks that claims to boost collagen and elastin production while improving texture. The results are firming, moisturising and give a lift to the appearance of the skin.

Cost: £49 for 50ml
Contact: 0844 557 4574/
www.beautyexpert.co.uk

FADE AWAY

BLISS London offers a dedicated serum to tackle liver spots on the hands and face. Apply at night before bed directly on to liver spots and wake up to clearer skin. Bliss Sleeping Peel Liver Spot Lifter is safe for all skin types and contains plant extracts to fade spots.

Cost: £38 for 15ml
Contact: 0808 100 4151/
www.blisslondon.co.uk

COVER UP

FOR fail-safe protection against liver spots, ditch the hand-cream and use a water-resistant high-protection lotion such as Banana Boat Factor 50 Ultramist Sport Spray instead. Buy a pastry brush so you can spread it evenly over the backs of the hands so that your palms don't feel greasy.

Cost: £4.99
Contact: 01954 719899/
www.bananaboat.com

KEY AREAS: The hands and face show a person's age but there are effective ways to hold back time