

SEE THE *light*

You've been diligently hiding away from the sun's harsh rays. Now you've heard about treatments that improve your skin by zapping it with super light. What's the lowdown?

To understand laser, IPL or LED light therapies, you need to understand that light is energy. And just as UVA and UVB light energy from the sun cause damage to different layers of the skin, different light therapies use particular wavelengths and intensities of the light to target particular receptors such as hair follicles, capillaries or deeper cell components. Sounds space aged? That's no surprise – the LED light technology now used in skin care was originally developed by NASA to improve healing while in space.

Although laser hair removal sends light energy to be 'received' by pigment at the base of the hair shaft, hopefully zapping it into oblivion, not all light is employed to seek and destroy. According to Scientific Director of Skin Physics Dr Curtis Crasto, cells exposed to red LED light produce skin-plumping collagen at 100-200 per cent times that of normal cell growth – the cells utilise the energy to work harder. No matter what your light sabre of choice, this is technical stuff. Hit the wrong wavelength and either completely miss the mark, or zap!, you've shut down the function you're trying to stimulate. For in-salon treatments, make sure you're dealing with an experienced operator. At home, follow the instructions and don't be tempted to double dip on your dosage.

TOP TIPS FROM SKIN CARE EXPERT BRONNIE ROBERTS

- Have a time line and discuss down time with your practitioner to meet your goals.
 - Reveal skin misbehaviour, as this could change the way your skin reacts.
 - Stick to prescribed skin products to maintain successful results.
- See northshoreskincare.com.au

MAIN IMAGE PHOTOGRAPHY: SABINE VILLIARD/GMC/PICTURE MEDIA



ELOS SKIN REJUVENATION & TIGHTENING

WHAT	The high-tech ELOS treatments effectively surpass both traditional laser and IPL to deliver safer, less painful skin rejuvenation and tightening treatments by combining light/laser and radio frequency energy. With almost no down time, the all-important collagen-stimulating heat is delivered directly to the deeper target layers of the skin, while upper layers are protected. Different 'heads' or settings address issues ranging from skin discolouration to wrinkles, plus it can be used to tighten the jawline, reduce laugh lines and improve texture.
WHY?	Why not? ELOS technology delivers results and goes where no face cream can go!
HOW MUCH?	From \$440 per treatment. See northshoreskincare.com.au or call (02) 9958 1855, Ext 1.
THE PROMISE	Skin will appear smoother, plumper and less sun-damaged, and the results will last years.
LEVEL OF COMMITMENT	Three treatments, four weeks apart. Pigmentation (sunspecks and freckles) will flake off after a week while collagen is gradually produced, plumping skin, in the coming months.
HOW B2B EDITOR AMELIA BLOOMFIELD RATES IT	This is my new fave beauty treatment (and believe me, I've tried a few!), as the results are so stunning and easily achieved. It is relatively painless – although topical numbing cream and the motivation to see results help greatly – and I went back to work afterwards with nothing but a little redness and heat. While you instantly see tightening and plumping due to the heat, I love that it stimulates your body's own long-term collagen production to reduce wrinkles. My dark pigment and sunspots went a week after the first session and after a month there was definite pore reduction and texture improvement. It's seriously good.

OMNILUX

WHAT	Omnilux is an in-salon treatment that uses a select spectrum of light (either blue or red), to stimulate the deep layers of the skin to up its own performance. Omnilux Revive (red light) stimulates collagen production. Omnilux Blue stimulates oxygen production to kill bacteria in the skin. You simply lie under the light for a period of time.
WHY?	Your skin is dull, sun-damaged, or seems 'sluggish', you're looking for all-over rejuvenation without invasiveness, or you want to add a booster-shot to other treatments.
HOW MUCH?	A session of Omnilux alone will cost about \$100 for 20 minutes, but look for salon specials or inclusions with other treatments. A course of about eight treatments is recommended. Call 1800 808 993 for practitioners.
THE PROMISE	Described as a massage for the deep layers of your skin, Omnilux Revive (red light), promises to counteract the effects of aging to plump, increase hydration, refine texture and bring a healthy glow back to the skin. It's easily combined with other skin care regimens to maximise pre-wedding skin perfecting and there is no pain or irritation.
LEVEL OF COMMITMENT	Like all light-based therapies, Omnilux works on layers of the skin that won't be seen for some months, so patience is required. But lying under the warm light is hardly taxing.
HOW WE RATE IT	This is zap free and perfect for scaredy cats without the desire to endure the slightest skin tingle. We love the fact that it works to boost your regular facial.



SKIN PHYSICS

WHAT	A hand-held device for Photorejuvenation, Skin Physics Photon supplements light therapy with a skin care range. It offers a similar function to Omnilux, stimulating collagen production, boosting hydration and reducing irritation.
WHY?	You want to give your skin a surge or renewal but you have a salon phobia, or you travel a lot and want to work on your skin at a time convenient to you.
HOW MUCH?	For \$299, a starter-pack includes the device and protective goggles, an instructional DVD, plus cleanser, serum and night cream recommended for use with the device.
THE PROMISE	A complete skin-care system that offers professional quality treatment at home. The extra-large LED head makes treatment time faster than its competitors.
LEVEL OF COMMITMENT	Because the device only treats a section of the face at a time, Skin Physics Photon takes longer to reveal its results than in-salon treatments such as Omnilux. However, over-use has no benefit – just follow the guidelines and wait for the results in 60-90 days.
HOW WE RATE IT	This is one for the beauty junkies and early adopters. While the technology seems to stand up, it will be a while before we judge whether this may be the future of light therapies. But the idea of tossing all those lotions for one tidy light sounds good.