



INVESTING IN BEAUTY

story **hayley dennyson** photographs **hayley dennyson, adi weerheim** and supplied

The quest for eternal youth has spawned an industry that generates billions of rands a year, but there's so much more to it than just aesthetics. We speak to local practitioners who are seeing real results

Dr Maureen Allem is a medical doctor with a special interest in aesthetic and integrative anti-ageing medicine and procedures. She is also the founder and medical director of national non-surgical, integrative, anti-ageing and weight loss company Skin, Body and Health Renewal.

"It's never too late to look after your skin," says Dr Allem. "It's the only 'garment' you have to wear for the rest of your life. There is so much amazing technology and products available to us now, and we should all be doing the basics to ensure we look after our skin.

"There's a lot we can do to correct damaged and aged skin, and there is exciting research taking place. There's no one 'best' product, but everyone should invest in a good facial sunblock, an anti-oxidant product for use during the day and a retinoid (preferably prescription strength) to use at night.

"When it comes to professional treatments, at the very least, have a good chemical resurfacing treatment or peel once a month. If you can keep your skin's cell turnover active and regular, you go a very long way to preventing premature ageing or improving skin that is already showing signs of ageing.

"When someone guesses your age as being much younger than what you are in years, that's beautiful," says Dr Allem.

Traditional therapies, like massage and facials, have been enjoyed for thousands of years and show no sign of losing popularity.

“ At the end of the day, it all comes back to the basics. A weekly exfoliation treatment and mask will ensure greater penetration of your products, giving you a better result ”



EXPERT EFFECT

Above: Stephanie Hawkins from Pink Petals and, left, Dr Maureen Allem.

Stephanie Hawkins is the owner of Pink Petals beauty salon in Kloof. "Anti-ageing has always been our clients' number one concern and we keep up to date with the latest innovations. However, people often go back to the techniques that have been tried and tested over the years. Laser treatments, peels and dermaroller are always popular, showing great results with regular use."

Every year sees new developments in massage, but the essential techniques stay the same. Whether you opt for Swedish, sports massage or hot stone, the end goal is the same – muscle toning and relaxation.



"We have definitely seen an increase in the number of men visiting our salon. They've taken a long time to come out of their shells, but men are more aware now of how important a groomed appearance is in a competitive society. From facials to manis and pedis, we have a number of men who come in for regular treatments, and we find that the men who spend time with us are more likely to treat their wives/partners to a massage or facial because they know how good it feels."

"At the end of the day, it all comes back to the basics. A weekly exfoliation treatment and mask will ensure greater penetration of your products, giving you a better result," says Stephanie. »

If you're after an holistic approach, facial rejuvenation acupuncture (FRA) could be the answer. Popular overseas for almost a decade, the system has developed a celebrity following, with Angelina Jolie, Sean Connery and Gwyneth Paltrow reported to have tried it. Recently, the technique has taken off in Joburg and Cape Town, but now Durbanites are able to try it for themselves with registered acupuncturist and homeopath Dr Bruce Thomson.

How does it work? Acupuncture is a whole-body therapy, going beyond aesthetics to treat the endocrine, digestive and neurological systems, showing results with an array of ailments. During your initial consultation, Dr Thomson will address any health concerns you may have, and include them in the treatment.

FRA involves the positioning of fine needles at specific points on the face and head, promoting collagen production and blood flow, toning the sub-dermal musculature and releasing the muscles that cause wrinkles. Combined with massage and low-level laser, the session is very relaxing.

If the needles put you off, consider that acupuncture is relatively low on the discomfort threshold compared to a lot of other, traditional beauty treatments.

A course of six to 12 sessions will show a noticeable improvement in the skin's appearance, but more importantly for Thomson "the effects are profound, from improved circulation and energy levels to



BEAUTY IN PROGRESS
 Above: Dr Bruce Thomson practises facial rejuvenation acupuncture. Left: Tanya Gafney and Dr Len Nel from Nel Skin Care Clinic, and, below left, the effects of Limelight Laser Therapy.

increased self awareness. My patients leave with bright eyes and a healthy, rosy complexion."

Dr Len Nel and Tanya Gafney work with Robyn, Dawn and Mandy at Nel Skin Care Clinic in uMhlanga, with 18 years experience combining the principles of in-depth dermatology and aesthetic therapies, incorporating laser technology. They strive to achieve and maintain a harmonic balance of facial shape and features for their patients, highlighting their beauty.

"Over the years, we've moved to more advanced technology relating to skin health," says Tanya. "One amazing development in the past 15 years has been Botox. Combined with fillers and laser therapy, the results can be incredible. We believe that conservative combination of modalities gives the most natural results, while too much filler or Botox can give an unnatural appearance.

If you were to use just one treatment, we would recommend Limelight Laser Therapy done once a year to improve sun damage, texture and promote anti-ageing of the skin. It also reduces redness and brown pigmentation. This is seen as chemo preventative, improving skin damage and achieving visible skin refinement." *

☎ **Dr Bruce Thomson at Brigit Filmer Spa & Skin 031 767 1668**

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☎ **Skin Renewal 0861 7546 72**

