

beauty buzz

Quick FIX

The real results of non-invasive, youth-restoring treatments. by CANDICE TEHINI

*a*re anti-aging treatments that you can have during your lunch break worth all the hype? We asked leading aesthetic doctors about some techniques that they have personally used, to see what your expectations should be.

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TREATMENT: CARBOXYTHERAPY

Carbon dioxide therapy, or miracle gas, has been touted as the biggest beauty breakthrough since Botox. "It is rapidly becoming known as the leading skin rejuvenation treatment," says Dr Maureen Allem, cosmetic doctor and founder of Skin & Body Renewal. Therapy involves injecting tiny amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) beneath the skin to break down fatty deposits and stimulate collagen production. The body interprets this as an oxygen deficit and responds by increasing blood flow, encouraging production of new blood vessels. This provides a surge of oxygen and nutrients to the treated area, and improves circulation, resulting in cell restoration. Increased oxygen concentration also improves the water retention in the area. It helps to rejuvenate, restore and recondition aging skin.

Cost: A carboxy laser facial, which is a combination of carboxytherapy, an alpha hydroxy acid peel and laser genesis to build collagen on the face, neck and décolleté, costs R2 750. Four to six 30-minute treatments of carboxytherapy sessions, every two to four weeks, are necessary for your face, while eight to 12 carboxytherapy sessions are required for cellulite and fat reduction. This depends on your age, body shape, cellulite type and grade.

Realistic expectations: The sensation can be likened to a dull throb. The mild discomfort lasts for around four minutes. CO₂ is 20 times more soluble than oxygen and is quickly diffused from the injection site to the surrounding tissue. After a treatment, the gas is totally reabsorbed within five minutes and the treated area will be slightly raised and red as oxygen diffuses into the area. This inflammatory response stimulates collagen production.

Precaution: The only side-effect is that bruising can occur if a vessel is pierced by the needle. However, this happens only in around 2% of patients. You can return to work immediately.

Comment: After the procedure, there is no pain, just possibly a crackling sensation under the skin that lasts until the gas is excreted. The area should not be rubbed or immersed in water for about four hours.

