

## NEW WRINKLE ERASER



The latest youth enhancing procedure involves minimal pain and downtime but delivers big anti-aging results. **Photograph by Victor Demarchelier. Fashion Editor: Joanna Hillman.**

Doubly swaddled in a white robe and a plush blanket, New York handbag designer Brett Heyman lies back in the Manhattan office of plastic surgeon Jon Turk, peacefully awaiting a younger complexion. There's little need to be anxious because, unlike most visitors to Turk's renowned Fifth Avenue practice, the 32-year-old founder of Edie Parker is not here to go under the knife. In fact, Heyman has never had even a single Botox injection or filler. She is preparing for her second Dermapen treatment, the newest in-office procedure that promises to soften facial wrinkles, minimize pores, fade scars, and leave patients with brighter, tighter, and younger skin — all courtesy of 11 tiny needles. "In my opinion, anyone ages

Victor Demarchelier

35 to 60 should be getting these treatments," Turk says. "We are not looking at it as a separate procedure like laser but as something that should be incorporated into a person's skin care."

The minimally invasive Dermapen treatment began popping up in doctors' offices nationwide early this year and is now being hailed as "the best recent innovation in skin rejuvenation," says Richard Anderson, a cosmetic surgeon in Salt Lake City. The electronically driven, pen-shaped device is an updated take on manual derma-rollers, a more painful and less precise way of puncturing tiny holes in the skin to stimulate healing below the surface, which in turn jump-starts collagen and elastin production. However, unlike derma-rollers, Dermapen is equipped with fine, vibrating needles that pierce the skin at a predetermined speed and depth, resulting in little damage to the epidermis. Downtime is minimal; patients can hide redness with mineral makeup and resume their normal activities immediately.

But perhaps the most revolutionary aspect of Dermapen is its ability to act as a "dermal infusion device," says Turk, meaning that prior to treatment your practitioner can apply a blend of active ingredients onto your face (think vitamin C and hyaluronic acid), which are then driven deep below the skin's surface through channels created by the needles. Using Dermapen in conjunction

with topical ingredients, Turk adds, allows them to be absorbed 100 to 1,000 times more effectively, which is a huge advantage when you're fighting the clock.

The procedure itself is quick, lasting about 20 minutes, as the device is moved across the skin in six areas: the forehead, cheeks, nose, upper lip, chin, and neck. Though Heyman doesn't bleed during the procedure (some patients do), she clenches her fists when the needles reach her forehead and upper lip.

Most Dermapen patients describe the treatment as feeling like pinpricks or, as Heyman puts it, "unpleasant but tolerable." For maximum results, doctors recommend three to four appointments spaced two to four weeks apart. (Cost per session ranges from \$250 to \$650.) Amalia Spinardi, owner of Jo de Mar beachwear (her customers include model Gisele Bündchen), travels all the way from her home in Brazil for Dermapen treatments in Turk's office. "I come to New York for business, but my Dermapen appointments are always the first thing I do," says Spinardi, 42. "When I turned 40, my skin started feeling saggy, and I wanted to get a lift without surgery or lasers," she says, adding, "I don't want a Botoxed face. I want to recognize myself." After two treatments, she reports "tighter, younger, and more glowy skin." Before trying Dermapen, Spinardi experimented with lasers but found them too painful to endure more than one session.

Spinardi is not alone. Many Dermapen devotees, including Heyman, are former laser patients, and according to Turk, Dermapen can produce results similar to those of Fraxel lasers but without the prolonged redness and pain. "Fraxel laser is a state-of-the-art treatment, but it's difficult to use on dark-skinned patients, and the downtime is often greater than advertised," Turk explains. "So if you can find a device that can do everything that Fraxel can do, or close to it, and can take away some of the negatives, then you have a very appealing product."

Not all doctors feel this way, however. Eric Bernstein, a dermatologic laser surgeon and founder of the Main Line Center for Laser Surgery in Philadelphia, disagrees with this analysis. He claims that although Dermapen will cause a small healing response, "when you create holes in the skin with energy from a laser, more collagen will be stimulated. I don't think Dermapen accomplishes the same end results," Bernstein concludes.

The folks at Dermapen acknowledge that they are not reinventing the wheel. "The technology is not groundbreaking," says Chad Milton, CEO and cofounder of the company. "We just innovated something that needed an update." Milton hints that he wants the next generation of the device to do exactly what doctors are hoping for: inject ingredients simultaneously during the needle use.

In the end, "Dermapen is not going to put surgeons or lasers out of business. It's another weapon in our antiaging armamentarium," says Anderson. For Heyman, Dermapen yields results. "My skin is smoother, my pores look smaller, and I'm not as blotchy," she says. She happily gathers her things from Turk's office, applies some mineral powder, and is off to a meeting, certain that no one will know she's just come from a plastic surgeon's office.

*Model: Heloise Guerin; Hair: Diego Da Silva; Makeup: Maki Ryoke for M.A.C.. Special thanks to Noah Rubinstein ([YinOvaCenter.com](http://YinOvaCenter.com)).*