

WORTH IT?

Beauty gadgets promise so much, but before we rush out to the shops just how do they really compare to a visit to a dermatologist? 'Anyone who wants serious results needs to be realistic,' says Reynolds Khan. 'You can never compare an at-home treatment with a visit to a dermatologist. Some gadgets, such as the Clarisonic range of electronic cleansers and massagers, have real benefits with few risks and are great for maintenance in-between clinic treatments. But others, which are more invasive, such as Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) for hair removal, and laser, should be left to the professionals. At a clinic, your skin is properly analysed before a customised treatment plan is drawn up; your medical history is taken into account; you are supervised throughout. With a home gadget, it's just you and an instruction booklet, as you hope for the best.'

But, says Dr Bunting, for time-poor women, there is a lot to be said for managing your own skin's rejuvenation and care. 'Convenience is a big priority,' she stresses. 'A lot of my patients no longer have time to commit to a course of in-clinic skin treatments, especially as they also need to take a few days off work to recover afterwards. You might not get the same quick fix with an at-home device, but I'm one of a growing group of experts that believes that subtle, gradual improvement with minimal downtime is a more appealing approach to busy women these days.'

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THE LATEST HIGH-TECH BUYS

From lasers to foot polishers, we've tracked down the latest grooming gadgets that might pop up on your Christmas list. But what's the verdict from our experts?

THE PEDI PRO DELUXE

Aim The new-and-improved battery-operated version of the Ped Egg buffs away dry skin, calluses and corns. **Method** Simply move it over hard patches on the soles of your feet and the steel files at the bottom rotate to remove dead skin, which falls into the base of the Pedi Pro as you work. **Pedicurist's verdict** 'It does the hard work for you and, as long as you follow the instructions, it's perfectly safe to use,' says David Barton, Maybelline New York's nail expert. 'Use it once a week on dry skin, as this lets you see which areas need buffing. The danger of soaking your feet first is that it causes your skin to swell and you may end up over-filing, which causes tenderness.'

£19.99, from mydirect.com, Boots and Superdrug

THE CLARISONIC OPAL

Aim An eye brightener that also helps reduce crows' feet. **Method** Dab eye cream onto the tip and move in a circular motion around the orbital bone (the socket around the eye). It gently taps the skin at 125 sonic movements per second, so eye cream penetrates deeper than if applied with fingertips. **Skin expert's verdict** 'The skin around the eye is the most delicate on the body, but this gadget is perfectly safe to use as it massages without pulling,' says Reynolds Khan. 'It's also great for lymphatic drainage, as it reduces puffiness and bags. But be realistic. Yes, it applies eye cream more effectively, but it only staves off future ageing in younger skins; on mature eyes, which have signs of damage, it can only help improve the look of crow's feet.'

£155, from [SpaceNK](http://SpaceNK.com)

THE PHILIPS RÉAURA, £799

Aim This first-of-its-kind home laser targets wrinkles and pigmentation. **Method** Penetrates the skin's top and middle layers to kick-start cell renewal. You divide your face into three zones – forehead, cheeks and chin. The RéAura will deliver enough laser to treat a single zone, it then stops, plays a chime and you move onto the next zone. It's recommended you use it twice a week for eight weeks at night as your skin will be a little red and sensitive afterwards. **Skin expert's verdict** 'It's good that safety measures, such as the immobiliser, prevent overuse,' says Reynolds Khan. 'But I would only ever advise that women have laser treatment carried out by a professional doctor, as it's a serious procedure.'

£799, from [SpaceNK](http://SpaceNK.com)

THE TUA SPA

Aim This multifunctioning cleansing tool improves skin tone, exfoliates and massages, and deep-cleanses pores. **Method** There are three settings: a steam to open pores and cleanse; ultrasonic waves to tone and massage; and a combination of ultrasonic and electric current to stimulate circulation and help face cream penetrate deeper. A 12-minute shutdown stops overuse. **Facialist's verdict** 'I'd only recommend using a gadget like this once or twice a week, as deep-cleansing gadgets can lead to sensitivity and dryness if used daily,' says Sarah Chapman, creator of the Skinesis facial. 'You wouldn't have a high-tech facial, which uses electrical currents, every day, either. Facial massage, using your fingertips, is great for toning muscles on a daily basis.'

£195, from tuaspa.com