

how to spend it

Spa Junkie on... Stem Cell Collagen Activator Therapy

Can a trio of pin-pricking, zapping and peeling smooth our reporter's fine lines and restore some youthful volume?



Image: Jay Yeo

JUNE 04 2013
SPA JUNKIE

PART: 1 | 2

Spa Junkie is midway through a Stem Cell facial. Following an aerobics massage and application of Collagen Activator, it's micro-needle time...

Sarah selects a handheld rolling device, known as the needling tool, and carefully rolls it across sections of my skin, working from my forehead down over my face, neck and chest. The instrument is covered with tiny needles that penetrate about 2mm deep into my skin, creating micro-channels for the serum that's about to be applied. She rolls the device in crisscross motions over my face for about 20 minutes. I feel very little pain, only a slight tingly pressure.

She then applies the Stem Cell Serum. The serum smells natural and earthy, and feels light but a little sticky. Despite the fact that my face has been punctured what feels like a thousand times in the past few minutes, the serum doesn't sting.

The thick, cooling and hydrating Skinesis Chin and Jaw Lift Mask is then layered on my face, setting into a rubbery texture that can be peeled off. Sarah says it is packed with skin-firming algae, plant collagen, brightening vitamin C, hyaluronic acid and chamomile and rose water, which (taking advantage of the micro-channel openings) deliver potent hydration to plump and lift the skin. It feels soothing and calming.

While the mask is working its magic, Sarah focuses her attention on my neck and chest area. She repeats the micro-needling procedure here before once again applying a liberal application of Stem Cell Collagen Serum. She says this treatment is excellent for targeting crepe-like skin, pigmentation anomalies, sun damage and loss of volume in the delicate décolleté area.

On removal of the mask, Sarah begins her specialised tapping massage technique, which she says aids absorption of any remaining high-potency serums. Her nimble fingers pluck and knead my skin, pushing and pulling it up.

Finally, my skin is zapped for 10 minutes with Omnilux LED light therapy. This red-light treatment promises to have a collagen-boosting, volumising and anti-inflammatory effect on my skin. The light is hovered over my face and neck to activate the natural healing chemicals in my skin. It feels warming – similar to a sunbed.

To finish, Sarah applies some of her daily essential products, including the peptide-packed Eye Recovery Serum and Dynamic Defence SPF15 moisturiser, which is rich in vitamins and antioxidants. They are both silky on the skin and smell deliciously floral.

I rise from the bed and my skin feels glowing and fresh – more like a blooming orchid than the wilting weed I arrived as.

The bottom line:

For 12 hours after the facial, my face was lobster red and quite sensitive, so I stayed at home and had a green tea and an early night. In the morning, however, my skin looked smoother and plumper (in the good sense). It also felt firmer, and my fine lines were less noticeable.

Despite the fact that a three-week course of three treatments per week is recommended for intense advanced anti-ageing, after only one session my skin felt revitalised. Sarah Chapman's Stem Cell Collagen Activator Therapy is an impressive firming, toning and lifting treatment, and, I think, one of the very best anti-ageing facials in London.

Spa Junkie pays for all her own travel, therapies and accommodation.

Sarah Chapman, 106 Draycott Avenue, London SW3 (020-7589 9585; www.sarahchapman.net); Spa Junkie paid £245 for a two-hour facial with one 10ml vial of Stem Cell Collagen Activator to take home for aftercare.