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skin smart

BODY BOOSTS

A new generation of high-tech treatments is giving us the power to smooth skin, build muscle, melt fat, and more. *by Kate Sandoval Box*

WE LIVE IN AN AGE when we can have agency over how our bodies feel, look, and fuel our confidence. Cutting-edge treatments let us decide if we want firmer skin or stronger muscles—and the timing is perfect, as more women are craving that control. “I’ve seen a big uptick in patients coming in for body treatments because during this past year, their workouts were affected, their eating changed, and they had more time to focus on themselves,” says Anne Chapas, M.D., a dermatologist in New York. Plus, the treatments—from fat-reducing energy devices to laser hair removal—have vastly improved, hurting less and offering more visible results. Here, your latest and greatest options. *(continued on page 35)*

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TARGET STUBBORN FAT

“CoolSculpting Elite is the newest iteration of cryolipolysis technology, which freezes fat cells to kill them,” says Sabrina Fabi, M.D., a dermatologist in San Diego. “Among its most innovative features are two curved applicators, which fit the shape of the body and make it easier to treat areas like the thighs, abdomen, flanks, back, and arms.” They’re also larger than past models, allowing for a gentler suctioning and offering fat reduction of up to 25 percent. Expect one to three sessions spaced two months apart. You may feel slightly uncomfortable until the tissue numbs and then experience soreness, numbing, or itchiness for about a week (but typically not enough to keep you from a workout). Average cost is \$2,450, though it depends a lot on the areas you’re treating.

REDUCE CELLULITE

The latest and truly novel way to tackle skin dimpling is with an injectable called QWO. The solution is injected directly into each dimple, and it hurts as much as any quick booster shot. It contains enzymes, called collagenases, that break down the tight, fibrous bands that pull on the skin. “We’ve found that this releases the dimpling, but it also seems to help the collagen fall into a more uniform pattern and stimulate more of it to form, which makes the overlying skin look a bit smoother,” says dermatologist Bruce Katz, M.D., who was part of the clinical trials for QWO. Expect three treatments 21 days apart. “There can be substantial bruising, especially after the first session, but we’ve found that it heals within weeks,” Dr. Katz says. Average price: \$2,500.

GET MORE FROM YOUR BODY CARE

Secret Derma+ Nourishing Antiperspirant (\$10, target.com) is a clinical-strength quick-dry gel that’s built to handle heat and stress while hydrating skin. **Olay** Cleansing & Renewing Body Wash (\$8, drugstores) contains vitamin B₃ and retinol to leave skin hydrated, softer, and brighter.

TONE YOUR CORE

Emsculpt Neo, the next generation of the popular abdominal muscle-building device, combines electromagnetic energy to stimulate the muscle and radio frequency energy to destroy fat cells and tighten skin. “It’s more comfortable and more effective than the original,” says Jennifer Levine, M.D., a plastic surgeon in New York. The machine causes a series of muscle contractions, which feel like the “pain” of holding a crunch or a plank, and then shifts into a series of tapping motions to help the muscle release lactic acid and recover. “Four treatments spaced a week apart is equivalent to at least three months of HIIT because these muscle contractions are deeper, and the machine is able to target more of the abdominal muscles than exercise can,” Dr. Levine says. “Patients feel and look stronger and report that they perform better in a workout.” The caveat is if you don’t keep using the muscle, you lose it eventually; the destroyed fat cells, however, don’t come back. Average price: \$3,000.

TIGHTEN SKIN

A series of two to three treatments with the InMode Morpheus8 Body device can help fade stretch marks or firm up a bit of laxity on all skin tones and body parts, Dr. Chapas says. It combines microneedling and radio frequency energy, with the tiny

needles helping the RF energy reach deeper into skin to encourage it to increase the production of new collagen and elastin. “What’s especially exciting is how much deeper we can go now. After we numb the area with a topical ointment, we can microneedle seven millimeters into the skin, which is two times deeper than previously done,” Dr. Chapas says. “It has quickly become one of my favorite tightening options.” You’ll experience redness and swelling for a few days afterward. Expect two to three treatments spaced a month apart. Average price: \$2,000.

ZAP UNWANTED HAIR

Laser hair removal technology has come a long way. “Treatments are faster, less painful, and safe for more skin tones and complexions,” says laser hair removal specialist Christian Karavolas, the owner of Romeo & Juliette Laser Hair Removal in New York. The Splendor X by Lumenis device is “the Ferrari of the category,” Dr. Chapas says. “It’s very fast; we treat full legs in 30 minutes.” And because it’s a blended wave length device—meaning that it uses both Alexandrite and Nd:YAG energy—it works extremely well on all skin types. “Plus, it’s virtually pain-free because you need less output from each wave length to achieve a superior result,” Karavolas says. “It’s a favorite of my male clients.” A full course of laser hair removal entails six sessions spaced six weeks apart. “But you’ll see a significant amount of hair reduction after two or three sessions,” Karavolas says. ■