

Need(le) a facelift?

Cosmetic acupuncture promises skin rejuvenation without side effects

BY NIVEDITA JAYARAM PAWAR

From Jennifer Aniston to Angelina Jolie, Robert Downey Jr, Madonna, Cher and Alicia Keys, it is the latest (slightly scary) anti-ageing facial that celebrities are obsessed with. Cosmetic acupuncture, a non-surgical treatment based on oriental principles, is highly popular today in the west. But can it really give you a facelift? Or does it just leave you with pins and needles?

Dr Liana Nenacheva, a holistic doctor and nutrition specialist who has been practising cosmetic acupuncture for the past 30 years in Russia and Belgium, is bringing this novel treatment to India and will be offering it to Indians at the Atmantan Wellness Retreat, Mulshi, this month. She is also going to train therapists in India in this Chinese technique so that it can be available to us even later. She tells us all we need to know about the technique and how effective it can be.

We have heard of acupuncture. How is cosmetic acupuncture different from it?

Cosmetic acupuncture is a holistic procedure done to reduce signs of ageing. It is a non-surgical treatment that helps deal with fine lines, open skin pores and skin puffiness.

On the one hand, it eliminates these signs of ageing and on the other, it promotes complete skin rejuvena-

tion based on certain parameters like reducing skin wrinkles, uplifting the skin and drooping eyelids, and improving overall skin tone.

Is cosmetic acupuncture clinically certified?

Yes, it is. It works on scientific principles like stimulating collagen (the main protein structure and connective tissue in the skin). It promotes good skin health and slows down the ageing process.

Please note that it is only a means to achieve skin rejuvenation and revitalisation and does not stop your skin from ageing. There is no treatment that can stop your skin from ageing and, thus, we say, cosmetic acupuncture is a safe procedure to slow down or reduce the effect of skin ageing in the most natural way.

How is it done and is it painful?

Since it is a non-surgical treatment, it is not painful at all. The procedure is target-based and very specific as per the individual's needs. In the beginning, specific points on the skin are marked to manipulate the movement of energy, based on the principles of oriental medicine. Thin, hair-like needles are placed into certain points within the body to stimulate targeted healing and regulate the body's natural functions. It doesn't hurt, there is just a slight tingle.

The treatment is not just for physi-



cal skin rejuvenation, but it aims to rejuvenate the mind, body and soul, all together.

A holistic cosmetic acupuncture treatment is a balancing of qi, blood, fluids, yin and yang, to get the desired

output of slowing down the ageing process. This is a dependable treatment form that can prevent your skin from appearing older.

But how can sticking needles into the skin improve looks?

The main principle of acupuncture is that there are 12 primary meridians or channels in the body. Stimulating acupoints on these meridians with ultra-thin needles encourages the free flow of blood and qi (universal life

energy) throughout the body to create healing and balance within the mind, body and soul.

The basic concept is that by inserting needles locally on the face, circulation is increased, flooding the



Cosmetic acupuncture is not just about preventing skin ageing but is also about promoting good skin health. In other words, it is a holistic approach and cannot go wrong as far as skin health is concerned.

area with red and white blood cells. Traumatizing the skin by inserting tiny needles will also encourage the production of healing collagen, the protein which the body uses to keep the skin youthful and elastic.

Are there any side effects?

Cosmetic acupuncture has no side effects. A person undergoing this form of skin therapy is not expected to suffer from swelling, skin scars, redness or even a stretched-out recovery time.

Having said that, there is no medical procedure which is completely detached from contraindications. Similarly, cosmetic acupuncture may or may not cause high blood pressure or severe diabetes mellitus. It will

surely happen if you don't consult a certified practitioner and especially, if you conduct the procedure during pregnancy or if an individual is suffering from cold, flu or any form of acute allergy. People who are prone to bleeding and bruising may experience skin problems. So, a better approach is to be mindful and careful.

What is the duration of the treatment?

The treatment requires between three to 12 sessions. Usually, I recommend closer sessions together (in case of 10-12 sessions especially) because the effects of cosmetic acupuncture are cumulative in nature and, thus, it should be a continued investment for

good skin health. Each session lasts 90-120 minutes.

After a few sittings, you will notice the difference in fine lines or wrinkles, reduced eye bags or puffiness, making way for the appearance of lifted eyes, improved facial contour due to reduced double chin or sagging cheeks and better skin suppleness and radiant skin. It is best to consult a licensed acupuncturist, who has special training in the field.

What are the advantages of cosmetic acupuncture over a surgical facelift?

There are plenty of reasons for choosing it over cosmetic surgery. First, it is safe and painless and the recovery time is faster with no visible side effects like swelling or skin discoloration. Second, it is not just about preventing skin ageing but is also about promoting good skin health. In other words, it is a holistic approach and cannot go wrong as far as skin health is concerned.

How does cosmetic acupuncture help in balancing the mind, body and soul?

The fact that cosmetic acupuncture is based on the concept of 'beauty from the inside' makes the treatment more attractive and effective. The approach from the very beginning, like the examination done during the first session, is aesthetic and only oriental medicine is used to stimulate energy inside the body.

Talking about some serious facts related to the origin of the therapy, the whole base concept of 'beauty comes from the inside' has existed in the Chinese dynasties for thousands of years. It was their discovery of energy movement and healing for rejuvenation, administered to the empress and the emperor, on which cosmetic acupuncture has dwelled on. Also, this technique of facial rejuvenation encapsulates bio principles like improved blood circulation, which works to help the individual feel better from both the inside and the outside. It is a natural treatment and there is no masking here. □