



Hydration:
in crisis

Pore Health:
optimal

Niche Media Holdings, LLC

Propensity to Aging:
needs action

21st-century facial

A NEW HARVARD-BORN TECHNOLOGY PROMISES TO REINVENT THE WAY WE LOOK AT OUR SKIN.

BY LAURIE KAHLE

When his newborn daughter, Ruhie, developed allergic eczema four years ago, Harvard Business School grad Rahul Mehendale spent months consulting specialists. “We must have seen a dozen doctors, but no one could pinpoint how to fix her condition. It was heartbreaking.”

But the brick wall he'd hit with Ruhie kick-started the development of a concept he'd been dreaming up with a fellow alumna, a renowned plastic surgeon, and a globally recognized biophysicist: a machine that spliced together complex computer algorithms with transdermal imaging to create an in-depth picture of a person's skin.

“We used this new device on my daughter and discovered that her

extreme symptoms were the result of ultralow sebum levels, so we treated her with water immersion, followed by the application of an oil-like ceramide cream to lock in moisture. The rest is history—she's a happy, healthy toddler now, and we are rolling out these mySkin system machines across the country.”

Inside the sparkling new 4,000-square-foot Corbu Spa & Salon at The Charles Hotel, the arrival of mySkin has sparked huge interest. “We're still the only spa in New England to offer it,” says aesthetician Jessica Dixon. “The response has been phenomenal—which is why we've been booking complimentary 15-minute sessions every Wednesday.”

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“Nutrition, sleep, stress, and weather are key elements that impact our skin.”—JESSICA DIXON

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“The technology basically uses something called visible light to scan up to three millimeters below the skin’s surface,” explains Mehendale. “So we get a reading for most of the major factors that indicate skin health: sebum and sweat gland activity, luminosity, elasticity, hyper-pigmentation, pores and blockage, among others. Wrap these all together and you get a prioritized list of what clients need to focus on for their skin, along with a rundown of products that would work best.”

The idea of being able to get such a fast, accurate imprint of how your skin is both aging and reacting to the products you use hasn’t gone unnoticed by the big beauty brands. Swiss skincare powerhouse La Prairie, known for its results-focused products, has started to use the system for one-off special events. The next one in the Boston area will be by appointment only at Bloomingdale’s in The Mall at Chestnut Hill on April 3).

But back at Corbu, it’s a part of every facial. So, interest piqued, I book their most popular treatment—a Custom Corbu Facial. As a 46-year-old reformed sun worshiper, I’m anticipating I won’t get a straight-A report.

A quick scan of my face produces a graph of scores rated on a scale of one to 10. I feel ridiculously smug at the discovery that my pore health is “optimal,” that is, no blemishes. Dixon agrees that may have been helped by my long-term Retin A use.

Things start going downhill when she tells me that redness is “minimally visible” and hydration is at a crisis point (well not quite, but apparently I need “deep hydration”). But most worrying of all is my propensity to aging. It’s pretty low on the scale and the advice is a somewhat ominous sounding: “Needs action.”

“Skin is a complex organ,” Dixon explains.

“Nutrition, sleep, stress, and weather are key elements that impact our skin. It can also take time for the effects of new products to kick in, as the skin goes through a renewal cycle approximately every 28 days.”

So I blame it on winter weather and lie back to be massaged with jasmine oils, gentle acupressure, and a thick masque of kiwi and sea algae (bespoke, of course, to address my hydration crisis).

Before I leave I can’t resist the chance to put my newly dewy skin under the microscope again, so Dixon scans me like a giant barcode once more. To my relief (and hers), it’s

full of noticeable improvements. Both my texture and hydration levels are much better.

I feel redeemed—after all these years of dishing out for facials (well over 50 in all), I’ve been getting a real, physical effect, even if it has been somewhat short-lived. I agree with Dixon that using these machines is like weighing yourself at the gym: They don’t make you look any different, but they do motivate you, whether it’s to quit smoking, wear SPF 40, or just get serious about your skincare routine. It’s worked on me, anyway; I’ll be back in two months to see if all my new skin-plumping products have paid off. *Corbu Spa & Salon, The Charles Hotel, 1 Bennett St., Cambridge, 617-661-5772; corbuspa.com BC*

ANALYZE THIS

Whether you opt for a professional skin analysis or a self-scrutinizing stare in the mirror, these products make a great addition to your skincare routine.

We’re all guilty of it—leaning over the bathroom sink to get as close to the mirror as possible, examining every minute pore on our faces. Luckily for us, top beauty brands continue to build their arsenal of highly effective at-home antiaging products. If pigmentation is your top concern, turn to the Brightening Serum Supreme from **Clé de Peau Beauté** (\$160; *Saks Fifth Avenue, The Shops at Prudential Center, 617-262-8500; saks.com*). Just launched in February, the serum uses a blend of wild ginger extract, vitamins C and E, and horse chestnut to promote cell turnover and limit melanin production. The result is a more even skin tone, faded dark spots, and smoother texture—not bad for a single product. Of course, no skincare regimen would be complete without a moisturizer. This year, **Jo Malone** adds to its Vitamin E collection with the new Vitamin E Moisturising Day Crème SPF 15 (\$65; *Neiman Marcus, Copley Place, 617-536-3660; neimanmarcus.com*). Besides the signature vitamin E, this cream also contains grape-seed extract to fight free radicals and wheat germ to seal in hydration; plus protection from UVA and UVB rays, essential even in winter. Finally, **Oe’s** nf 20 p.m.>a.m. Skin Feeder (\$75; *Ardan Medspa + Salon, 72 Central St., Wellesley, 781-235-7788; ardanspa.com*) makes a welcome addition to your nighttime routine. Like all Oe Cosmetics products, p.m.>a.m. Skin Feeder uses natural ingredients such as honey, ginseng, green tea leaves, and fruit alpha-hydroxy acids to replenish, detoxify, and renew skin while you sleep. What could be easier than that?

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