



"Some patients come in with very high expectations. Therefore prior to performing any aesthetic treatments, it is very important for us doctors to counsel patients about the risks and results so they can expect what to achieve. Patients have to be realistic about the results and also understand the possibility of side effects prior to any treatment," says Dr. Teh Siow Yen, aesthetic doctor at The Sloane Clinic.



2 Fillers
Dermal fillers can be divided into two categories; permanent and non-permanent. According to Dr. Teh, the main permanent dermal fillers in use today are made of substances such as polyalkylimid (Bio-Alcamid) and polyacrylamide (Aquamid). Permanent fillers can last up to 5 years. Non-permanent dermal fillers include hyaluronic acid (Restylane, Juvedrem, Hylaform), calcium hydroxylapatite (Radiesse), poly-L-lactic acid (Sculptra), fat and collagen. Temporary fillers are absorbed by the body over time, usually in 6 to 12 months and require repeated treatments to maintain the effect. "Fillers are a gel like substance injected under the skin which is used to plump out deficient areas and to smooth out lines and wrinkles," describes Dr. Teh. Small quantities of fillers are injected underneath the skin and the area is then massaged gently. You will be able to see a visible difference immediately after your treatment. Dermal filler injections can give a natural looking result that does not affect facial expression.

Health & Beauty : September 2011

- Dr. Teh explains the three main types of chemical peels:
- Superficial peels**
 - Superficial chemical peels are the mildest type of chemical peel and can be used on most skin types
 - Superficial chemical peels usually need multiple treatments for desired results
 - Superficial chemical peels include the use of Alpha hydroxy acids (AHAs) such as glycolic acid and Beta hydroxy acids (BHAs)
 - Medium peels**
 - Medium chemical peels penetrate the skin more deeply than superficial peels and the depth of penetration is increased as the chemical concentration increases.
 - Trichloroacetic acid is the main peeling agent used for medium peels
 - Deep peels**
 - Deep chemical peels penetrate the dermis layer of the skin
 - They are the strongest kind of chemical peel and are used only on the face
 - Deep chemical peels are for individuals with deep wrinkles from sun exposure or is used to treat skin wrinkling around the lips and chin area
 - A deep peel can be done only once in most cases

"Deep peels are rarely used nowadays because of the risk of scarring," says Dr. Teh

WHAT TO DO BEFOREHAND!
Before undergoing any form of treatment, it is crucial to find a medical practitioner who is registered, experienced and properly qualified. Please give your doctor thorough research before signing up for a treatment. Here are some questions you need to ask yourself:

- What is the doctor's credentials and level of experience?
- How long will the results last?
- How much will it cost?
- What are the risks, possible side-effects and complications of the procedure?
- What is the procedure like?
- What pre and post treatments will need to be taken?
- What can I expect when the procedure?

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?
Common side effects include:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Itching
- Lumps or hard areas in the skin

Chemical Peels
Chemical peels are used to improve the appearance of the skin by removing the outer damaged superficial layers of the skin. By 'peeling' away the top layers of the skin, new skin is able to regenerate thus producing more youthful looking skin. Those who suffer from skin problems like acne, dark pigmentation, blotchy looking skin, uneven skin tone and dull looking skin can benefit from chemical peels. The strength of the chemical peel will determine the depth. Deep peels will have a longer recovery period.

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Lasers
Laser is an acronym for "Light Amplification by Stimulated Emission of Radiation". There are two types of lasers typically used in laser skin resurfacing: ablative and non-ablative. Ablative lasers ablate both the surface and the deeper layers of the skin. The healing process produces more collagen and promotes skin regeneration. Ablative lasers can make a significant difference in the appearance of deep wrinkles, surface wrinkles, and skin discolorations. Ablative lasers are more aggressive than non-ablative lasers therefore recovery time is longer and can last up to a week.

Non-ablative lasers are less aggressive and work beneath the epidermis layer, combating heat to the deeper layers of the skin. This stimulates collagen production and results in more supple, elastic and younger looking skin. Non-ablative lasers can remove some skin discolorations, improve some wrinkling, and, with repeated treatments, help generate collagen and elastin. With non-ablative lasers, there is no downtime (recovery time) meaning patients can return to work or to their daily activities immediately after treatment.

Non-ablative lasers are used to treat:

- Acne
- Sun damage
- Freckles
- Age spots
- Tattoos
- Stretch marks
- Some scars
- Birthmarks
- Broken capillaries
- Fine lines and wrinkles
- Hair removal
- Irregular pigmentation
- Redness of the skin

What is it for?
Laser treatments are appropriate for patients seeking treatment for discoloration, wrinkles, sun damage, acne marks, or other types of imperfections in skin appearance.

What to do after treatment?
Stay out of the sun and use sunscreen with high SPF every day.

What are the risks?
Laser treatments are generally very safe but if it's not done by the right person, the risks include burns, scarring, abnormal pigmentation and infection.

We hope this article has given you an insight on the most sought after cosmetic procedures. If you think aesthetic treatments are for you, by all means go ahead but keep in mind that your safety always comes first. **H&B**