



## With the help of lasers and lights

ONE of the modern-day techniques to help a person look younger, minimise lines and wrinkles, are the use of lights and lasers to stimulate collagen growth. Collagen, which is responsible for skin strength and elasticity, breaks down with age.

"There are different treatment modalities today, but all with the basic function — to get your cells to make more collagen," says Kenneth Lee, director of The Sloane Clinic.

With treatments like Thermage and Laser Toning, collagen stimulation leads to tightening and firming of the skin, so that it gets a lift. But different modalities have their additional plus points. Thermage, for example, may not be of much help to improve pigmentation issues, while a newer technology like Laser Toning might.

Laser Toning tackles poor skin texture and evens out tone, Dr Lee explains. "So that's the additional benefit of Laser Toning which has virtually no downtime because the laser bypasses the outer skin layer and heats up only the bottom layer."

Laser Toning is that super facial which manages to tackle skin problems like oily skin and acne, and going beyond that, pigmentation, superficial freckles and sun spots. "Pores which are large because of an underlying problem like oily skin, for example, would usually be minimised after a series of treatments," he says.

Before treatment, a customer's face will be cleansed and exfoliated. Then upon recommendation — especially for "laser virgins" — a numbing anaesthetic cream is applied to the face. Or one can opt to brave it out.

Just as he started applying the pen-tipped laser onto my face, I was infinitely glad I had been a wimp and had chosen the better-safethan-sorry route. Under the light and heat of the laser, I felt like the Tin Man in *The Wizard of Oz* getting a touch-up from his local welder. Your face gets heated up quickly and there's

also a smell of singed hair. "A side benefit of Laser Toning is that it burns off facial hair," reveals Dr Lee. He manipulates the laser pen so that it's systematically moving over the whole face, concentrating on areas which needed extra lasering, as seen from a pre-treatment photograph taken earlier of my face and "read" through a computer programme that reveals the evenness of the skin.

Twenty minutes later, the treatment is over. The patient is then usually given a light chemical peel. True enough, despite the heat felt on my face, it wasn't too red, appearing even less inflamed, in fact, than a regular facial with extensive extraction.

As with most facial treatments, a series of treatments every two to three months will yield longer-lasting, more visibly-improved results. The Sloane Clinic's Tone and Lift programme is priced at \$3,000 for six sessions of Laser Toning, which are bundled with other complementary treatments.

Over at St Gregory spa at Parkroyal on Beach Road, Titan treatments have been available since January. "The form and purpose for Titan and Laser Toning appears the same, although the type of light used is different," explains Dr Patrina Wong.

Titan uses infrared light to stimulate new collagen growth by heating the dermis. "Light energy provides a more uniform distribution of energy for heating the deep dermis than other energy sources, such as radio frequency," says Dr Wong. Titan treatments start from a promotional price of \$800 for the face and \$588 for targeted areas like the hands.

— By CHEAH UI-HOON

*Laser Toning treatments are offered by The Sloane Clinic's two branches at Caltex House and Chip Bee Gardens. Call 6471 1108 or check out [www.sloaneclinic.com](http://www.sloaneclinic.com). Titan treatments are available at St Gregory, Parkroyal on Beach Road. Tel: 6290 8028.*