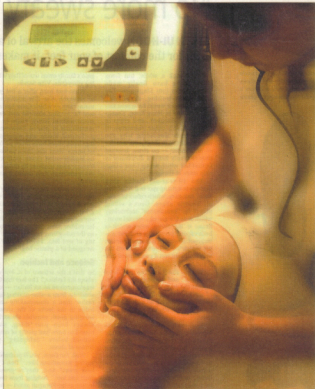




**Celebrity favourite:** Actresses Kim Cattrall (top) and Jennifer Aniston swear by US skincare range Epicuren



**Treat for the skin:** More people are looking at the benefit of having their monthly facials done under the supervision of a dermatologist

# Getting a facial at the doctor's clinic

By CHEAH UI-HOON

CELEBRITIES such as Sarah Jessica Parker and Kim Cattrall, of *Sex in the City* fame, swear by the American skincare range Epicuren. And so do Jennifer Aniston and Jennifer Lopez. So when patients of dermatologist Low Chai Ling asked her to bring it in, she thought, why not?

The Sloane Clinic is one of a growing number of cosmetic surgery clinics here that offer customised or branded non-invasive facials to clients who are willing to pay a little — or it could be a lot — more for a value-added routine. It could be a simple cleansing, deep-cleansing, rejuvenation and firming — treatments that traditionally have not been, and do not need to be, administered in a clinic.

"With Epicuren, we're offering non-invasive facials that work because its high-grade quality products should be more effective," says Dr Low.

While The Sloane Clinic was content to bring in the range for distribution, one of the stipulations of Epicuren is that a clinic must provide its treatments, not just sell its products over the counter. So treatments like the Epicuren Classic facial, the Alpha Lipoic facial and the Green Tea and Ginger facial — with prices from \$150-\$170 for 60 minutes — are now administered here.

Epicuren is known for its use of metadermabolic, or organ-specific, enzymes — aqueous vitamin and protein complexes that cause rapid cell regeneration, oxygenation and nutrient absorption. Epicuren products supposedly promote total skin health by topically stimulating the body's immune system.

The treatments are offered alongside The Sloane Clinic's other "basic" facials, most of which use the clinic's machines for microdermabrasion and ultrasonic cleansing by soundwaves, touted as one of the more clinical and effective ways of deep-cleansing nowadays.

"My patients like these services because they offer an 'in-between', a bridge if you will, between laser treatments, because obviously you can't do laser treatments all the time," says Dr Low.

And obviously there are clients out there who do not mind the added benefit of having their monthly facial done under the supervision of a dermatologist.

"We want to have a comprehensive range of services," explains Dr Low. "It used to be all-invasive and nothing else. Now, if we have patients with minor problems, we can still give them something. We can treat patients through the different phases of their life."

As a result, she thinks more cosmetic surgery clinics will start to offer niche treatment brands or protocols.

The Wellness Lounge at Paragon, which is under the umbrella of the Pacific Healthcare group, does a lot of post-surgery treatment for patients who have been to cosmetic surgery clinics under Pacific Healthcare. It offers not only pre- and post-op treatments but also regular facials using skincare brands like Dermalab's Swissline from Switzerland and Academie from France, says Wellness Lounge manager Cathlin Mok.

Its "star" treatment is customised electroporation of Vitamin C for the face, which uses electrical current for transdermal diffusion of Vitamin C into the inner layer of the skin so there's 99 per cent absorption rather than a superficial one.

"This is customised in-house and it's our key product," says Ms Mok, who explains that the treatment "lightens pigmentation, prevents dark spots, stimulates collagen production and repairs wrinkles". Such treatments slow the skin's ageing, basically. And if you can do this through non-invasive, medically-proven methods under medical care, then why not?