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## beauty sleuth

### Tracey Strange tries an anti-ageing treatment loved by the stars

**Pity poor Britney Spears** – in the spotlight again, not for her failed marriage, but for her failed beauty regime. The whistle-blower? High-Definition Television (HDTV). The new fear of looks-obsessed stars is not dodgy plastic surgery or insidious ultraviolet rays, but cutting-edge broadcasting technology that throws every imperfection into sharp relief (or in Britney's case, every smoking line, acne blemish and dark circle).

After the popstar's recent Miami concert was broadcast on HDTV in the States, celebrities who may have once got away with a bit of pancake and warm lighting are lining up for HDTV makeup lessons and micro-dermabrasion; a skin-perfecting treatment currently racing away in popularity, mainly because the results are impressive enough to cope with the harshest spotlight.

Micro-dermabrasion works in a similar way to a heavy-duty exfoliant. Fine crystals, usually made from

diamonds, aluminium or chemical-free organic grains, are blasted onto the skin, then immediately suctioned off again. The feeling is more one of being 'vacuumed' than sand-blasted, and is painless, encouraging skin to renew itself by stimulating the production of new cells and by promoting the production of elastin and collagen.

"The beauty of micro-dermabrasion is that it doesn't only remove damaged skin," says cosmetic physician Teresa Cattin, waving her magic micro-dermabrasion wand over my complexion. "It stimulates new cell growth as well. The result is fresher, healthier-looking skin with improved texture."

Who will it help? Anyone with sun damage (extreme or otherwise), active acne and scarring, pigmentation marks, stretch marks, fine wrinkles and enlarged pores. Increasingly it is being seen as an alternative – and better – treatment to the laser and chemical resurfacing treatments of the past, which included prolonged redness, pain, and the risk of scarring and pigment changes among their drawbacks.

The treatment is fast – about 15 minutes – and leaves little or no redness. After one session, my skin looked fresher. After four, I could see an improvement in pigmentation, fine lines and texture. My skin looked younger, brighter and more even in tone. Scarring was reduced, brown spots gone. But don't just take my word for it. On the day of my final session, two of my closest friends also booked appointments.

**Micro-dermabrasion costs \$150 a session. Dr Teresa Cattin's FaceCare practice is at 212 Wairau Rd, Glenfield, Auckland, ph (09) 441 9690.**



## what's the alternative?

**Q** I get headaches which I think are related to stress as they worsen towards the end of the working day. Which approach should I take?

**A** Posture and alignment play an important role with headaches. Make sure your desk and chair are at the correct height. Many people spend long hours at the computer, and should take regular breaks to have a stretch. Ask professionals such as a physiotherapist, yoga teacher, osteopath or physical trainer at your gym for some good stretching exercises for

your neck and upper back. I recommend cranial osteopathy for correcting structural misalignment and releasing tension from the cranial bones. It is very gentle and achieves long-term benefits by treating the underlying structural problem. A good magnesium supplement also helps by relaxing muscles and reducing stress on the nervous system. I recommend Blackmore's magnesium celloid; also Anti-flamme, a cream by Natures Kiss. Peppermint cools, while arnica helps

muscular strain. Gelsemium by Naturopharm is a remedy for when the headache arises from muscular tension in the neck and settles behind the eyes.

To rule out other causes for headaches, consider dehydration, caffeine withdrawal, sinusitis or vision problems. If the headaches do not resolve with these measures, visit your doctor. "Natural Ange" is a registered nurse and naturopath who advises listeners on Auckland's 95bFM on Tuesday at 9.30am. [www.naturalange.com](http://www.naturalange.com)

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