

From electrified 8-inch needles to gruesome chemical peels, they've tried them all. So which treatments do these top Beauty Editors recommend — and which would they NEVER have again?



Pictures: GRANT TRIPLOW/JAMES ROBINSON/ALAMY

OUCH!

your muscles toned with massage so you don't need injectables. Amanda Birch, at Gielly Green salon in Marylebone (£120 for 90 minutes), is fantastic — I always walk out feeling like a movie star and people do notice.

WORST TREATMENT: Perhaps the biggest beauty mistake I made was going for a peel.

I am a red-head and peels can often be too harsh for Celtic skin, but I never think of my skin as sensitive, so I thought it would be all right.

Though it was only very light and superficial, it gave me a horrible tingly pins-and-needles sensation, my face was red and I had to stay inside and out of the sun for four or five days.

I wouldn't put my skin through that again.

BOTOX? No — I'm not an injection girl, which is partly because I'm happily married and a mother-of-three. In particular, I don't want to set my 14-year-old daughter the example of wanting to constantly alter my looks. I'm happy looking like her mother, not her sister.

NUMBER OF INVASIVE TREATMENTS: One — I once had Restylane, a filler which uses hyaluronic acid, injected into my hands. It did plump them up and make my veins stand out less, but I wouldn't bother having it again because I don't feel the need.

TOP TIP: Don't be afraid to age gracefully.



JO GLANVILLE
BLACKBURN, 45
Woman And Home
beauty director

BEST TREATMENT: I love a good facial, as a great facialist can keep

Sensational SKIN

Amanda Birch is one of London's most inspiring beauty therapists and one of w&h's favourite people.

SKINCARE STARTS FROM WITHIN. "You've heard the usual spiel of 'drink more water, eat more greens, less sugar, wheat, etc,'" says Amanda, "but reducing acidic levels in your body allows your cells to function more efficiently. I've seen clients who increased their intake of greens, oils, nuts and pulses come back with boundless energy, and it's even helped with acne."

GO ORGANIC where possible. Amanda loves The Organic Pharmacy. "My favourite is Double Rose Ultra Cream (£43.95 for 50ml), with antioxidants and vitamins." All-natural Aromatherapy Associates De-stress Mind Bath & Shower Oil is like Rescue Remedy for the body. When you're in need of a break, rub a dot on the pulse point on the wrist for almost instant calm.

GENTLE, EFFECTIVE CLEANSING IS SO IMPORTANT. Avoid daily granular cleansers or cleansing wipes, as these tend to over-exfoliate and irritate skin, while many foam cleansers strip the skin's acid mantle, and this can take 12 hours to recover. Use an oil-based cleanser, such as The Organic Pharmacy Carrot Butter Cleanser, a solid balm that you warm between the palms of your hands. Massage in to help stimulate circulation and get lymph going. Soak a muslin cloth or towel in warm water to remove the cleanser and give skin a mild exfoliation. Use cool water for the final rinse.

VITAMIN C IS A GREAT ANTI-AGER for stimulating collagen renewal. "I recommend this to anyone over 30, as it's a brilliant ingredient to take internally and put on



RIGHT MOVES

Relaxed, toned facial muscles are key to youthful-looking skin. Here, Amanda shows a few steps from her massage, pressing and holding areas of tension to re-energise the face.

your skin. Try SkinCeuticals CE Ferulic Combination Antioxidant Treatment, a potent vitamin C formula with vitamin E that's great for reducing the look of pores and fine lines.

GOT A SPOT? Crush an aspirin tablet (which contains a natural exfoliant), mix with water and leave on the affected skin overnight for a mild peel, or do all over your face for five minutes for a quick pick-me-up for tired skin.

MASSAGE THOSE MUSCLES. Enjoy a holistic lifting/lymphatic drainage massage. Amanda does a 90-minute facial that's pure massage, acupressure and Reiki, and works by releasing tension in muscles and skin

tissue. "The skin is literally 'stuck' to your facial muscles, meaning that great muscle tone helps create a younger-looking face."

To relax tense muscles, press and hold areas of tension, using your three middle fingers; areas such as at the outer corners of the eyes, along the brow line, the third eye (frown line), the hollows of the cheeks, and along the length of the jawline, pressing either side (see photos, above).

Find a peaceful place, close your eyes and tune in to your body. Really focus on your thumbs as you press, and you will feel a pulsating in the muscles. The more aware you make yourself, the greater the benefits.

MINI LIFT? Keeping your eyebrows shaped and neat will open up the eyes.

BE HAPPY. It's far better to have laughter lines than frown lines. Consider neuro-linguistic programming or life coaching to help you feel better about yourself.

BUY A PAIR OF MBTs. Good posture can take years off you, and in MBTs you can't slouch! "They have changed my life," says Amanda. "Put on a pair and go for a walk in the park. It's great for mind and body." Visit Gielly Green Salon, 42 to 44 George Street, London W1; call (020) 7034 3060 >>

GET THE KIT

- + SkinCeuticals CE Ferulic Combination Antioxidant Treatment, £60 for 15ml, a potent vitamin C formula with vitamin E that stimulates collagen renewal for healthier-looking skin.
- + The Organic Pharmacy Carrot Butter Cleanser, £26.95 for 70ml, with gorgeous aromas of lavender, rosemary and chamomile, this makes skin glow when removed with a warm towel or muslin cloth.
- + Aromatherapy Associates De-stress Mind Bath & Shower Oil, £30 for 55ml, contains lots of frankincense, which makes it good for anxiety.



AMANDA'S handcare tips

- Always apply SPF20 or more sun protection on the backs of your hands after you've applied hand cream. Treat first then protect.
 - Find a hand cream you like and it will encourage you to use it often.
 - Use soap that doesn't contain sodium laurel sulphate - it's too harsh for the skin. I also like to decant Ren shower gels, £14 for 250ml, into small pump bottles and use rather than liquid hand-wash.
 - Have three tubes of hand cream on the go - one near every sink and a travel-size in your bag - use after your hands go in water.
 - Wear gloves when you garden, wash up or use cleaning products.
 - Sunlight is intensified through glass, so wear gloves when you drive. Fine cotton ones will do.
 - When you're giving yourself a face treatment, never miss using a little on the backs of your hands.
- Amanda Birch Hand Rejuvenation Treatment, £65 for 1 hour at the Michaeljohn Salon, 25 Albemarle Street, London W1; (020) 7629 6969.*

Problems, problems

Q I'm 35, 50 and don't have any age spots. I'm worried that having microdermabrasion will thin my skin and actually deep-wash it!

A That would be true if the microdermabrasion was done too deeply. But at a gentle level it's doing nothing more than giving you a really good cleanse - check with your therapist.

Q I've been using sun and olive oil as a natural hand scrub. Is there anything a bit more glam, but still natural?

A Space NK founder Nicky Kinnaird recommends a mix of lemon juice, crushed almonds and honey. We

Our pick of the HAND CREAMS

Most of us simply don't use enough hand cream and it's crazy when it's still the cheapest of beauty buys and gives instant rewards. But hands are as individual as faces, so find a cream that's tailor-made for you. Our current squeeze? We like these for different reasons...

1 DESICCATED SKIN
Kiehl's Ultimate Strength Hand Salve, £19.50 for 150ml. So rich it takes a mighty squeeze to get it from the tube. Deeply moisturises and feels like a glove on the skin. Fabulous stuff!

2 STRESSED HANDS
Barielle Intensive Hand Treatment Cream With Gloves, £22.50 for 113g. The professionals' favourite with vitamin E and aloe vera. Smooth on pre-bed, pop on the gloves and have fab hands by morning.

3 SENSITIVE SKIN
Ahava Mineral Hand Cream, £10.25 for 100ml. Perfect for skin that's tense, dry and chapped. With Dead Sea minerals and an indulgent feel, it is very gentle and leaves your hands feeling so very supple.

4 LINED HANDS
Clinique Water Therapy Moisture Glove Hand Cream, £15 for 75ml. New and so good. With white birch it re-establishes the skin's

moisture barrier and makes hands with thin, dried-out skin beautiful again.

5 SHABBY NAILS
Liz Earle Naturally Active Body Care Hand Repair, £7.50 for 50ml. A real triple duty gem. Nourishes skin, conditions nails and softens cuticles while essential oils of neroli, lavender and bergamot scent the skin. Yum!

6 DRY, CRACKED SKIN
Cutex 8 Hour Rescue Emergency Treatment, £2.99 for 75ml. An SOS call out for seriously dry hands. Delivers the goods in seconds and lasts - as it says on the tube - for eight hours. It's a brilliant bargain.

7 PROBLEM HANDS
Clarins Age-Control Hand Lotion SPF15, £14.50 for 75ml. Lightweight and with UVA/UVB sun filters, it prevents and lightens pigmentation marks. If you want younger hands for longer - try it!

For where to buy, see page 181

like to work honey into ragged skin around nails, then pop on cotton gloves overnight - preferably when your man's away!

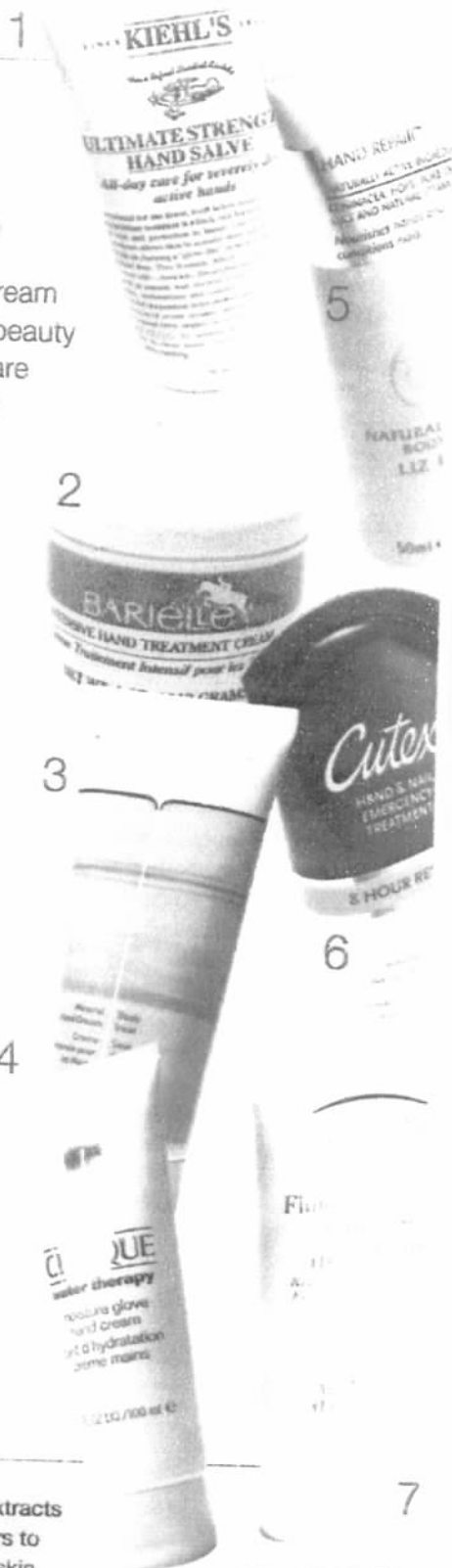
Q Age spots are a real problem for me and I don't want them to get worse. Any answers?

A You could try Barielle Porcelain Whitening Cream, £16 for 56.70g, which aims to make a visible difference in about 4 to 6 weeks. It's full of

botanical and fruit extracts plus natural sun filters to nourish and protect skin.

Q My hands get dry and achey. Is there a good treatment?

A Wax treatments are perfect. Your hands are cleansed, given a peel treatment, coated in wax then warmed. When the wax is peeled away, your hands are massaged for a smooth, silky finish. Depileve Peach Paraffin Treatment costs £20 to £35. Call 01603-482194. **W&H**



Remember,

one small squeeze of cream

used every time you

wash your hands

is better than

lots used

once in a blue moon

New moves at THE SALON



Amanda Birch, facialist at the Michaeljohn salon, agrees with the, "what's good for your face is bound to be good for your hands" principle. "I have clients

who spend fortunes on anti-ageing face treatments, but never take their hands past a manicure. The more beauty-savvy, however, know techniques like microdermabrasion are great and ask me to include their hands when they have facials."

Those clients have inspired Amanda to create a new Restorative Hand Treatment that mimics a luxury facial and features microdermabrasion to slough off dead skin

and soft light lasers to repair and stimulate cell growth, plus all the extras we use on our face – exfoliators, floral toners, serums, collagen masks and sun protection.

It's this reflection of all things facial that makes for a successful hand treatment. While we can't include the hi-tech things at home – peels, masks and serums are right there, so shouldn't we extend the courtesy and use them on our hands too?

New pampering

There's no doubt that a "hand facial" gives a great anti-ageing payback. So, in true beauty pioneer spirit, we asked Amanda to come up with a Restorative Hand Treatment to try at home.

"At home you miss out on the microdermabrasion and the soft light lasers. But this routine gives hands the kind of pampering treatment they deserve. It's easy to do yourself, but even nicer on girly evenings when you can work on each other's hands."

If buying a whole new set of products makes you feel quite faint, simply share them with your face.



Deep cleanse by mixing a really good exfoliator with about the same amount of cleanser. Work it over hands, paying attention to the backs, knuckles and wrists.

Sisley Gentle Facial Buffing Crème, £29 for 47g, and Cleansing Milk With Hawthorn, £41 for 125ml.



Wipe away with a flannel wrung out in warm water, then remove any traces of cleanser with cotton pads drenched in floral skin toner. Floral toner is much kinder to skin and leaves it prepped for the next stage.

Kiehl's Rose Water Toner, £12 for 200ml.



Brighten and resurface the backs of your hands by smoothing on a little facial exfoliator (used alone this time), leave to dry then roll off using gentle fingertip movement. This encourages dead cells to lift off and new skin cells to surface. Sweep toner over again.



Massage hands with hand cream. Work from fingertips up towards your palms, then your wrists using light, stroking movements. Finally, massage your nails and cuticles. Skim off excess with a tissue. Add lavender oil to hand cream for a lush fragrance.



Find a mask with vitamin A that plumps up the skin and smooth over the backs of your hands, then rest for 15 minutes. Rinse off, then skim over toner.

MD Formulations VIT A Plus Firming Treatment Mask, £23.50 for 75ml.



Apply skin serum to the back of your hands. Work it over lightly, but don't over-use, it isn't necessary. Vitamin C serum is brilliant, a great antioxidant as it brightens skin and helps prevent age spots.

Remedie Super C Serum, £67 for 30ml.



Kiehl's Rose Water Toner, £12. MD Formulations VIT A Plus Firming Treatment Mask, £23.50. Remedie Super C Serum, £67. Sisley Gentle Facial Buffing Crème, £29 and Cleansing Milk With Hawthorn, £41. Megan Gale SPF 25 Day Wear Moisturising Serum, £17.

Finish up by using another slick of hand cream, then working a sun protection cream over the backs of hands and over the forearms. Finally, whip an emery board over your nails. **Megan Gale SPF 25 Day Wear Moisturising Serum, £17 for 50ml from Space NK. >>>**