

Star of Light

DR EILEEN LEW has just set up her own cosy and welcoming aesthetic clinic in Pacific Plaza's Scotts Medical Centre. As you might expect, wild horses could not have kept **Verne Maree** away.

Having done her training at University College London and met her orthopaedic surgeon fiancé there (he's also Singaporean), Eileen is fond of the city and has close ties with it. When I visit her, she has just attended a conference in Harley Street, and is about to go back for a few days of training on advanced Botox and fillers – mixing a bit of work with pleasure, she confides.

That London connection is useful, especially as Eileen wants to remain up to date with the somewhat different techniques required for treating Caucasian faces as opposed to Asian ones.

"I love contouring the face," says Eileen. "Every face is different, and though I offer a wide range of skin products and services, I still tend to customise treatments for individual clients."

Central to her arsenal of beautification equipment is the multi-talented **Sciton Joule** machine from the US. Through a number of arms that deliver laser, infrared, broadband light and more, it can be used for a variety of treatments for the face and body: from permanent hair removal to the elimination of sunspots or acne scarring and the eradication of broken or unsightly veins.

"I like to take a holistic approach by working to improve the overall condition of the skin rather than just one problem," she explains. "Say a patient asks me to treat pigmentation marks, but I foresee that he or she might come back to me for problems with open pores, broken veins, wrinkles and so on, I will treat those at the same time."

Philosophy

Eileen doesn't like to stipulate an age when aesthetic treatments should start. "I use the analogy of having a nice car. If you want your skin to look good over the passing decades, you need to maintain it properly."

That's why she believes in preventing damage in the first place. "If you come to me for pigmentation treatment and then go back to sizzling yourself in the sun, you'll get no ultimate benefit from the treatment."

She uses numbing cream sparingly and only when necessary, so as not to increase the patient's tolerance too much, she says, as that puts them at more risk of burning. Instead, she has concocted her own, just strong enough to slightly numb the area and make the treatment more comfortable. The Sciton machine delivers consistent contact cooling, before, during and after the application of the pulse, which is a further insurance against heat damage.

If you're Caucasian and envy the way that thicker Asian skins resist wrinkling and ageing, here's some good news: Eileen loves treating Caucasian skin – Types 1 and 2 – because they are far less prone to post-inflammatory hyperpigmentation, they heal well and they do not scar nearly as easily as Asian skins do.

Hurrah! It's taken me *years* to find a doctor who's undaunted by the challenge of treating my sun-damaged chest.



TREATMENT REVIEW

Problem #1: DISMAL DÉCOLLETAGE

Though I'm ever grateful for the years of laser and IPL treatments that have refined the tone and texture of my facial skin, it looks a bit as though my head has been Photoshopped onto the shoulders of a lizard.

SOLUTION: BBL (BROADBAND LIGHT) PHOTOTHERAPY (FROM \$850 FOR CHEST)

I'm a serious fan of IPL (intense pulsed light), because it's been so good at eradicating my sunspots and broken

capillaries. The third-generation incarnation of IPL, BBL is also good for smoothing wrinkles and treating melasma and dark under-eye circles.

It produces a broad beam of highly concentrated light that is filtered by wavelength to select the particular skin imperfections that the doctor wants to target.

When the unwanted pigments catch the light, they turn darker almost immediately, rise to the surface over the course of three to ten days, and then flake off naturally.

PROCEDURE: After carefully doing a test patch, Eileen moves the applicator tip over the entire surface of my chest, cooling and zapping by turns. It's all quite bearable.

Afterwards, it does sting a bit; but minutes after the application of an iced towel and a couple of ibuprofen, I feel fine.

I leave with extremely detailed post-care treatment instructions.

Don't go in the sun.

Do apply the various unguents regularly, especially the SPF cream. *Don't* go to the beach. Let us know if blistering or anything else untoward appears. *Don't* go for a long, sweaty run. (I go for a run anyway.)

AFTERWARDS: Especially for the first week, I wear tops that cover my slightly patchy-looking chest – mainly to protect the sensitised skin from light. Actually, I'm a bit anal: at the salon where they do my Gelish, I make them cover the UV-light machine with a towel. (Eileen would be so proud!)

Problem #2: SAGGING SKIN

To be fair, this isn't entirely my own fault: with age, facial skin sags along with the rest of the body. Anyway, growing older isn't so bad – especially when you consider the alternative. The trick with sagging jowls is to catch them in time, before your nose gets to your chin and your cheeks settle into those little hollows above the collarbones.

SOLUTION: SCITON STAR2 SKIN TIGHTENING AND REJUVENATION – INFRARED (FROM \$650; \$950 FOR FULL FACE)

Using an infrared filter (SkinTyte2), STAR2 deeply heats the dermis up to about 42 degrees to stimulate collagen production; it also has the effect of tightening pores. Eileen generally combines it with a gentler application of BBL, for a rejuvenated glow and to target any redness or pigmentation. She usually recommends a schedule of four or five treatments, on a monthly basis. After that, you might return once every six months for maintenance.

PROCEDURE: Once the light topical anaesthetic applied by Angela has taken effect, Eileen spends 35 to 40 minutes moving the applicator head across my face and jawline, methodically, a section at a time. The sensation is totally comfortable, even pleasant.

AFTERWARDS: My face looks a bit pink for 20 minutes or so, and for the next 24 hours or so I can just about feel that I've had something done. It's a *good* feeling! 🙌



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