

After



# JUST HIT *refresh!*

TOO NERVOUS TO GO UNDER THE KNIFE? AS I DISCOVERED, YOU DON'T HAVE TO – THERE ARE A NUMBER OF LESS DRASTIC THINGS YOU CAN DO TO GET YOUR SKIN LOOKING SMOOTHER, FIRMER AND MORE REFRESHED.

BY CATHI TREVOR



Before

The taboo around plastic surgery has decreased significantly in recent years, but there are many of us who are still too nervous to go under the knife. Luckily, there's a plethora of non-surgical options to choose from if you want to refresh your look. But with so many choices out there, how do you know where to spend your money?

I'm in my mid-50s. I eat relatively healthily and exercise on a regular basis, but lately I've been feeling (and looking!) worn-out and haggard. There's only so much a night cream and jade roller can do, so when Cape Town doctor Jan Nel reached out to me to talk skin, the timing was perfect. He offers a comprehensive solution to anyone looking to rejuvenate their skin without going in for surgery.

I met Dr Nel at his sunny sea-view rooms at the Waterfront to discuss my skin concerns and get

his professional opinion. 'When consulting with a new patient it's important to understand the reason for them visiting the practice while giving me time to observe their facial features,' he says.



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A thorough evaluation helps Dr Nel understand the anatomical structure and form of your face. He also discusses the importance of living a balanced lifestyle: exercising, using a good SPF and eating healthily, and how these are used to strengthen and support the treatments he uses. 'I like to create harmony with the face, mind and body,' he says.

I told Dr Nel that my aim was to have a relaxed and refreshed face, and not to look too 'done'.

He suggested a combination of treatments: hyaluronic acid fillers, Prophilu injections, Sculptra injections, Botox injections and a thread lift.

With my magazine deadline looming, I had to have all my procedures done in one sitting (which was a bit daunting), but I knew I was in capable hands.

## Procedures

### INJECTABLES

I went back to Dr Nel's rooms a week later with a clean face. A topical anaesthetic cream was applied and, while it set in, Dr Nel drew guidelines on my face. Because I'm rather squeamish when it comes to needles, I must admit I kept my eyes closed for most of the process. A hyaluronic acid (HA) dermal filler was administered first. This gel-like substance is inserted into the skin to target sagginess, adding volume to specific areas of the face. HA, which is found naturally in the body, attracts water, so it has a plumping effect.

Next came a treatment called Profilllo. 'It's an injectable skin-remodelling treatment containing a super concentration of hyaluronic acid, used specifically for skin lacking in elasticity and volume,' Dr Nel says. 'It helps to stimulate one's own collagen and improves hydration.'

Sculptra, the third injectable he used, is also beneficial in stimulating your own collagen and providing hydration. 'Sculptra is a direct collagen implant in a liquid form, which is injected into specific areas of the face.' Dr Nel calls it the 'liquid thread lift', as it creates the same effect as threads but is far more subtle, and the risk of lumps is far less. 'The tightening effect of Sculptra is far superior to any other product currently on the market.' These injections are administered more on the lateral side of the face and into the hairline, which creates a lifted appearance while addressing skin laxity. There's minimal discomfort during the procedure and almost no downtime afterwards.

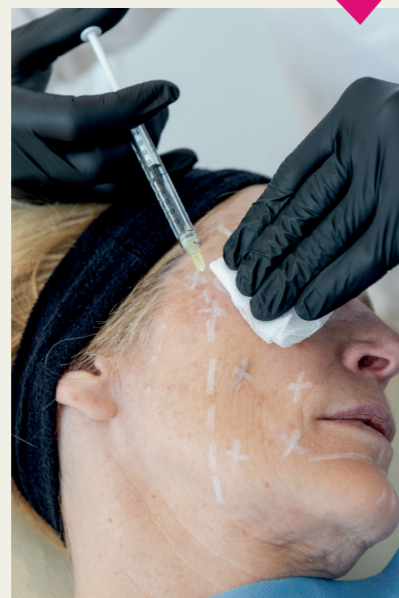
Dr Nel also administered Botox to my frown line and around my eyes. Thanks to the numbing cream, I didn't feel a thing.

#### Injectables

Hyaluronic acid dermal filler



Profilllo



Sculptra



### THREADS AND A PEEL

Then it was time for the thread lift. Lifting threads use dissolvable sutures to tighten and lift your skin. It's a less invasive procedure than facelift surgery and, best of all, can be performed in under 45 minutes without needing to go under a scalpel! The procedure involves inserting threads into the top of your skin tissue and pulling them tight, which lifts the skin. The result is a more refined-looking face, with volume restored and the effects of ageing significantly reduced. The threads dissolve naturally, allowing skin to produce more collagen and elastin, which gives longer-lasting results.

A lot of this sounds scary, but Dr Nel's professional approach put me at ease and, thanks to the anaesthetic cream, I didn't feel much at all. I experienced pulling sensations and was aware of needles going in around my mouth and jaw area, which felt a little sensitive, but overall it was manageable.

A thread lift can smooth lines around the mouth and tighten sagging skin under the lower jaw. The results are evident immediately after the procedure and can last from one to three years. The best candidates for a thread lift are aged 35 to 55 because they still have relatively good skin tone with a bit of sagging. 'If there's too much loose skin, surgery may be the best option,' Dr Nel says. He performs this procedure on both men and women.

The treatments took just more than an hour, which went by really quickly. As I stood up to look in the mirror, I could already see an improvement in my face. Dr Nel assured me that after a few weeks my collagen production would increase and my skin would look

even smoother, firmer and more refreshed.

My treatments were not done yet. Celeste took me through to her room for a pixel peel. Chemical peels reduce the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, shrink pore size,

reduce the appearance of sun damage (particularly hyper-pigmentation and sun spots), brighten your complexion, and improve the texture and quality of your skin. Superficial peels are recommended as a series of treatments to achieve best results.

#### Thread lift



Suspension threads



#### Pixel peel



*'It's still the same me, but she's looking notably more refreshed.'*

## The results

Afterwards, I met a friend for coffee. She'd been looking into non-invasive ageing treatments and wanted to see my results. A tiny bruise had formed on the right side of my temple, and I had two little indentations on my cheeks where the threads had gone in (which Dr Nel had assured me would disappear), but other than that there were no tell-tale signs. I just added a touch of foundation to my bruise and cheek marks for the next week, before they disappeared completely.

I've been scrutinising my face every day since the treatments: it's still the same me staring back, but she's looking notably more refreshed. It's made me realise how much I've avoided looking at my face up close for the past few years. While these treatments are for your appearance, the positive effect they have on your spirits is undeniable.

As I move into the later stages of life, I'm embracing Dr Nel's philosophy: life is about balance. It's important to have a healthy attitude and to live a healthy life, but there is nothing wrong with a bit of extra help to make you look (and feel!) great along the way.

For info on these and other aesthetic procedures, go to [capetowndoctor.co.za](http://capetowndoctor.co.za) ❖

## Prices

Since every makeover is individualised, costs will vary from person to person, but this is what my treatments came to, just to give you an idea:

- ▶ Dermal filler: R3 500
- ▶ Profilllo: R3 950
- ▶ Sculptra Express: R5 500
- ▶ Botox: R2 500
- ▶ Thread V-lift: R9 500
- ▶ Pixel peel: R1 950