

# Undoing the damage of a life in the sun



LOOKING HEALTHY BECAUSE you have a tan can be a bit like looking happy because you are drunk – it can be a short-term illusion with a price.

Kiwis have some of the most sun-damaged skin in the world – a price we pay for clean air, outdoor lifestyle, and skins that would be happier in a cloudier climate.

You can avoid sun damage by covering up and using sunscreens, but advancements in science offer hope for those who didn't.

From California, where youth and sun are almost religions, there are now physician-only products that give your body the ability to undo some of the damage.

To understand how the repair works, we need to understand a little about how the damage is done. Ultraviolet radiation from the sun and sun beds has two main wavelengths, UVA and UVB rays. UVB rays have a shorter wavelength and cause sunburn in the outer layer or epidermis, but UVA rays cause a lot of aging because they penetrate deeply into the middle "dermal" layer of skin and damage collagen fibres.

As these are repeatedly rebuilt, skin gets wrinkled and loses its elasticity as collagen becomes depleted.

To protect against sun damage, our skin forms melanin, better known as a tan. The trouble is, fair to medium-skinned people have uneven melanin production, and tend to form freckles, moles and age spots, (or liver spots). Without protection, capillaries break and skin loses its tone.

Prevention is better than cure, but some existing damage can be undone by stimulating the skin's own capacity to repair itself.

To do this we can either stimulate collagen production and break down pigmentation using intense pulsed light (IPL) treatments, or use specialised peels suited to your specific skin type to get through the epidermal layer of skin to the dermal layer beneath.

Peels painlessly take away layers of dead cells that build on the skin's surface, revealing new skin beneath.

Most creams and potions people use can't make it past the epidermal layer to work where they are needed. Skin may feel softer, but they do nothing to stimulate collagen production or address the



ABOVE: Specialised scanning technology can reveal broken capillaries (middle) and pigmentation (right) from sun damage in the dermal level of the skin before it makes its way to the surface, or epidermis. Skin Deep Aesthetics has the Reveal Skin Analyser in Gisborne for a limited time from this month to give clients a baseline to track treatment progress.

aging taking place in the middle "dermal" layer of skin.

Young, healthy skin constantly renews itself in this layer, eliminating or repairing old and damaged cells, and generating new cells before fine lines, wrinkles, or sagging can develop.

As we age, the rate we heal slows as levels of human growth factor drop, and this, along with DNA denaturing from the sun's radiation mean our skin begins to lose the race repairing the damage.

Growth factors are natural proteins abundant in young skin that regulate cell turnover and generation, and the production of collagen and elastin in the skin.

Skin Deep Aesthetics now has the latest low-allergenic skin rejuvenation range from American company, Benev.

In addition to high quality peels and maintenance products, Benev also has human growth factor products, which simulate the healing processes that take place in young skin.

This is not a time machine, but the results are often amazing, and offer hope for a range of skin issues, including eczema, acne, psoriasis, and pigmentation.

**Call Skin Deep Aesthetics for a consultation with Dr Anuya Deshpande. Skin Deep Aesthetics is Gisborne's dedicated physician-led appearance medicine clinic.**

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