



COSMETIC SURGERY



SKIN TIGHTENING

ULTRA-SOPHISTICATED TECHNIQUES ARE OFFERING EXCITING
NON-SURGICAL OPTIONS FOR A FIRMER, SMOOTHER COMPLEXION

While treatments like Thermage CPT and Ultherapy remain as popular and effective as ever in

terms of restoring tone and texture to sagging skin, new technologies are making a firmer, smoother complexion easier to achieve.

"Skin-tightening technology has progressed in leaps and bounds over the last several years," says Sydney plastic and cosmetic surgeon Dr Mark Kohout. "Here, we are talking specifically about the application of radio-frequency currents to the skin. The effect of the radio-frequency currents is to heat the collagen, which shrinks under the influence of [a higher] temperature, causing significant skin-tightening.

We find that the greatest benefits from this treatment are in people who are not quite ready for a facelift, tummy tuck or armlift, but would like to have some improvement in their skin tone and tightness following either pregnancy or weight loss or simply advancing age."

"[Generally], these treatments take between 30 and 45 minutes, depending on the area, and they involve minimal downtime as there are no incisions and no bruising to get over," he says.

Elos ReFirme

This smoothing and tightening technique relies on Elos light therapy to remodel and rebuild collagen within the dermis. It is typically used for the face, neck and décolletage. "The Elos current, which uses radio-frequency energy, is delivered into the dermis via a special probe. The dermis is heated and collagen is denatured. It then repairs in a tighter, firmer way," says Kohout.

The procedure generates heat, so it does sting the skin in a similar way to sunburn, however, topical anaesthetic can control the discomfort to some extent. "Results can be seen immediately in the form of a fresher visage. It is very effective for sagging, loose skin on the jowls and neck.

"It evens the skin out and refines lines. Results are said to continue to improve for up to six months after

treatment and collagen naturally builds up in the body."

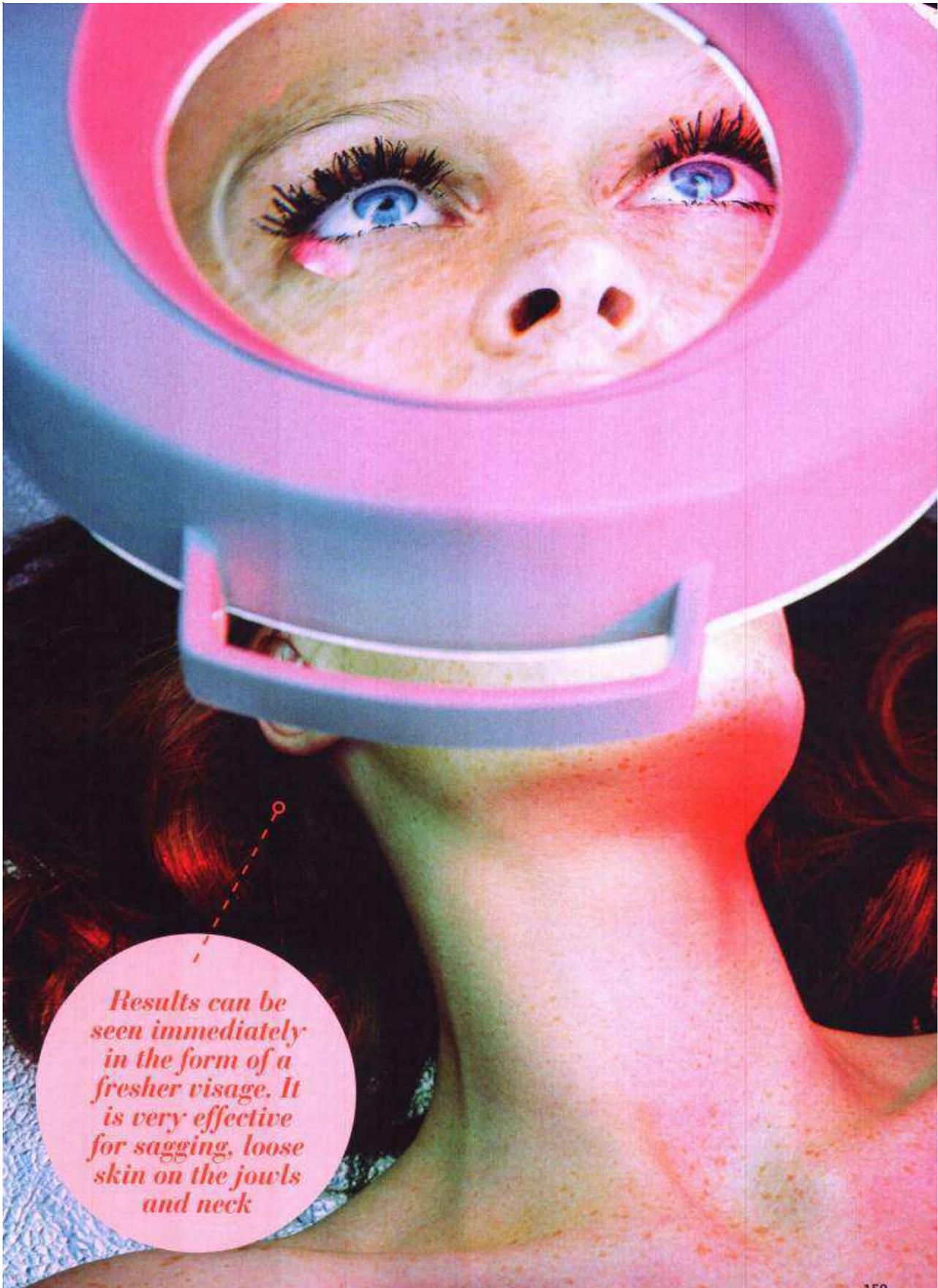
Expect to pay about \$500 for one session or \$1600 for four sessions, which will produce the best, longest-lasting results.

Pellevé

"This new treatment targets facial wrinkles quickly, with no anaesthesia and no downtime," says Dr Joseph Hkeik of All Saints Cosmedical Clinic in Sydney. It delivers constant, gradual energy to the skin, causing heat to build up where the skin and fat layers come together. The increasing heat modifies the collagen bundles deep inside the skin, causing them to contract, and stimulating the growth of new collagen. This results in firmer, tighter skin.

"Pellevé is a great choice for anyone looking for a non-surgical solution for treating wrinkles and the signs of skin laxity," says Hkeik. First, a protective gel is applied to the face. No anaesthetic is used, so the patient acts as a guide to describe the depth of the sensation as the doctor moves the handpiece across their face. Patients say they feel a deep, warming sensation when the doctor ►







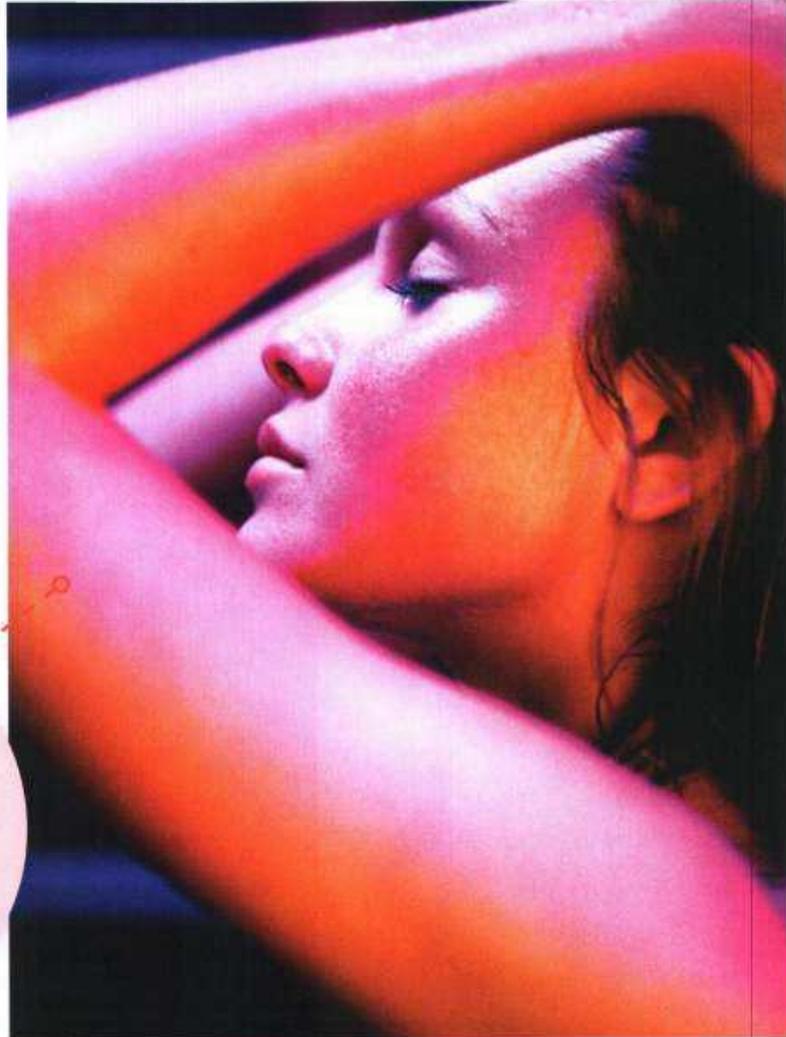
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touches the area being treated with the Pellevé handpiece. A full facial treatment typically takes about 45 minutes to an hour.

"Mild swelling and redness may occur, but this usually goes away within a few hours to a day," says Hkeik. "Many people see results immediately after just one treatment, with lasting improvement for up to six months. Additional treatments may improve results, so consult your practitioner for a recommended number of treatments."

Expect to pay about \$770 for a full-face treatment.

The energy travels down into the skin where skin cells are formed, helping to heal and strengthen collagen fibres



Still popular ...

THERMAGE CPT

This advanced technology is designed to lift and tighten the skin using radio-frequency waves. Heat penetrates deep into the sub-dermis and triggers collagen remodelling.

Dr Garry Cussell from The Facial Rejuvenation Clinic in Sydney says Thermage CPT can be used on many areas, including the tummy, buttocks, thighs, arms and neck. "This treatment can improve the strength of skin in any area that is experiencing thinning or

laxity," he says. There is pain associated with the procedure and, although painkillers can be given, Cussell says most patients can tolerate the treatment without pain relief. Work can be resumed immediately after treatment, too.

Patients should see some immediate lifting and tightening, with results improving over six to nine months.

Expect to pay about \$3850.

ULTHERAPY

Dr Warwick Nettle of Sydney's Silkwood Medical describes this treatment as

"extremely effective at lifting and firming". Ultherapy helps tighten up sagging skin by using acoustic sound energy in a hand-held device on the predetermined sections of the face or neck. The energy travels down into the skin where cells are formed, helping to heal and strengthen collagen fibres. After just one 30- to 40-minute treatment, you'll see effects instantly, but the best results are seen in the second to third month. No downtime is required.

Expect to pay \$1000 to \$3500, depending on what areas are treated.