

Ancient + Modern Ways to LOOK YOUNGER

Story by Laurie Stoneham
Photos Courtesy of Acupuncture
Wellness Center

Acupuncture Wellness
Center Offers Full
Array of Affordable,
All-Natural Facial
Rejuvenation Services

WHEN GEORGIA COLEMAN wants to look her best for a special occasion, she visits Austin acupuncturist, Moira McCarthy, LAc, DiplAc, for a hi-tech facial that makes fine lines disappear and gives her skin a healthy glow. The Jade-E microcurrent facial combines low-level electrical stimulation with colored light therapy, and “the results are immediate,” said the special events consultant and owner of Hamilton Twelve Hill Country Event Facility. “It plumps up my face for up to five days.”

Natural health practitioner Kiana Smith has Type 1 diabetes so her body is extremely sensitive. She relies on ancient Chinese medicine

and goes to McCarthy for facial acupuncture. After just 10 sessions, Smith said her deep frown lines were gone and her neck, jaw line and whole face were lifted – results that lasted five years.

For the past 18 months, Haylie McCort has had both types of facials, preferring the Jade-E for hydrating and the acupuncture for tightening. The web developer said, “I got totally hooked on the Jade-E when my face looked great after being on an airplane for a day.”

In addition to microcurrent facials and cosmetic acupuncture, or what McCarthy calls “aculifts,” she also offers a hydrating Collagen Crystal Gel Mask. Part of Whole Body Health, a multi-disciplinary wellness center in

Westlake, the Austin Acupuncture Wellness Center is operated by McCarthy, who has been an acupuncturist since 1992. She is the only practitioner in Austin offering this array of all-natural, drug-free and extremely affordable facial rejuvenation alternatives. The gel mask is \$65; facial acupuncture is \$100, and the Jade-E facial is \$120.

Beauty Tech

Recent clinical studies showed that microcurrent increases collagen and elastin production when applied to the skin. The current also gently exercises facial muscles, stimulates circulation and increases oxygenation. Additionally, >>>



See photos of the Jade-E facial online:

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This series of before (LEFT) and after photos shows how crow's feet fade after the Collagen Crystal Gel Mask (CENTER) and are diminished even more following the Jade-E facial (RIGHT).

McCarthy explained the impulses enhance penetration and absorption of the creams used during the facials through a process known as "iontophoresis."

The Jade-E technology also generates colored light that's refracted through 12 different gemstones. The light and current are applied simultaneously and work together synergistically to ease wrinkles, get rid of under-eye puffiness and dark circles, and tighten saggy areas.

The Results

In researching this article, McCarthy offered to let me experience a complimentary gel mask and facial to see for myself if and how well they work.

I arrived wearing only mascara (on my face!) Our session started with the gel mask, which contains plant collagen and other nutrients and is designed to moisturize deeply, improve coloration, minimize pores and reduce fine lines.

Covering everything but my eyes and mouth, the clear, two-part mask was about a half-inch thick, odorless and felt cool and slightly wet on my face. I couldn't feel the electrical

impulses being applied from the Jade-E machine. In fact, I didn't feel anything and was so relaxed that I could have fallen asleep.

Afterwards, my face felt incredibly moist, smooth and soft, and it looked like I had been out in the sun or was wearing foundation. A close-up look at my eye area showed that the fine lines were indeed finer.

McCarthy began the Jade-E facial by painting my face and neck with a rich, all-natural cream, and massaging my forehead and cheeks with two applicators that had metal tips. More cream was applied and a second set of applicators filled with Q-tips worked around my eyes, lips and mouth. Longer wands were used in the last phase to massage my neck and décolletage. The facial wrapped up by wrapping my face with warm, moist towels. Again, I felt nothing but total relaxation.

As promised, the results were immediate and lasted about three days. A prominent age spot faded as did my crow's feet. The most dramatic change was the vertical lines on my upper lip were nearly gone by day two!

Like every other muscle in the body, the 22 face muscles aren't toned

after one exercise session. Improvements are cumulative, so an initial series of 10-12 facials is suggested.

Lou Coppola has had the series and said her daughter commented that her eyes and cheeks looked "lifted" afterwards. Coppola added, "Even after the first session, my skin had a luminous look to it that people noticed." According to McCarthy, the colored light produces the radiance most of her clients report because "the light penetrates the cells and reflects back out for 24-28 hours."

Going with the Flow

Chinese medicine and acupuncture have been practiced for thousands of years and are based on regulating the flow of the body's natural life energy called Qi (pronounced "chee"). Aging makes Qi more difficult to flow up into the face, resulting in weaker muscle tone, wrinkles and sagging skin.

During facial acupuncture, fine needles are inserted into 20 different points on the face to stimulate the Qi. The needles, which are about the diameter of a human hair, increase

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When you fall in snowboarding, you fall hard. Really hard. For me, it was mostly backward – which explained the major bruises to my posterior end – but for others, it's forward. Broken wrists and head injuries are common in snowboarding, and I was pretty happy to be wearing a helmet when I crashed backwards, head spinning.

I went up and down that beginner green slope for what seemed like a zillion times, determined to catch air at some point – to show these little whippersnappers that, yeah, I'm over 40 – and I STILL kick ass. And I did, when I wasn't falling on it. Like many things in life that are delicious and satisfying – sex? chocolate? – once was not enough.

Even William said I did pretty good for a first-timer. He was a total inspiration, but his wife, also in her 50s, is who I want to be when I grow up. We met briefly and, just as briefly, she glided away with the practiced motion of someone exuding confidence and skill. And that applies to everything in life – not just snowboarding. I'll be back, Utah, I'll definitely be back. ★

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circulation and oxygenation and create what McCarthy calls “microtraumas.” As healing occurs and the Qi starts flowing more freely, new, stronger and more elastic cells are formed.

This therapy can be fairly intense and is not recommended for those who have never had acupuncture. After having had a number of aculifts, Kianna Smith said, “Moira is very easy and has such a loving touch.”

The effects of facial rejuvenation are more than skin deep. McCarthy's clients report having more energy, feeling less stressed, and finding re-

lief from allergies, headaches, digestive problems and TMJ.

Choices

McCarthy's clients mix the modalities according to their individual needs. “Some will have five aculifts, followed by five Jade-Es. Some come in every few months and others every few weeks. Or, some just have a facial before a special event,” McCarthy said.

Acupuncture Wellness Center is apparently serving a growing trend in Austin. “What I'm seeing is that more and more people want cost-effective, natural alternatives to conventional cosmetic procedures, and the facial rejuvenation services I provide offer those choices.” ★

MORE INFO

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Galveston. The area was the hardest hit on the island, with up to 12 feet of water coursing through the historical district. The Strand is home to quaint shops, eclectic restaurants, historical hotels and museums. Walking through The Strand is akin to walking Sixth Street in Austin, or Bourbon Street in New Orleans.

Moody Gardens

Next to Galveston beaches, **Moody Gardens** is the second most visited attraction on the island. Moody Gardens is a >>



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