



**NIL POINTS**

*A serum with the skin-renewing benefits of microneedling? 'It's safer, with less downtime and comparable, if not better, results,' says Dr Christine Hall*



# IMITATION GAME

An application a day keeps the doctor away... Welcome to the age of copy-cat cosmetics, where tweakments are replaced by beauty-cupboard heroes, says Astrid Joss

**THE AGE OF INJECTABLES** has turned meta. Social doyennes are clamouring over a whole new generation of skincare designed to mimic their favourite clinical procedures, from Botox to lasers and microneedling. Even top doctors are heralding the arrival of at-home formulas capable of replicating and, in some cases, even amplifying their in-clinic work. For beauty-obsessed swans, this is a skincare revolution. And for the needle-nauseous noble? Your era is finally here...

## LASER

**THE ORIGINAL:** It's the go-to treatment for sun damage, blemishes, redness and pigmentation. Energy from beams of laser light projected onto the skin is absorbed by a targeted area. This interaction causes a biological response that clears up the complexion, giving it a smoother look.

**THE MIMICS:** Eucerin Anti-Pigment Dual Serum

The powerful active ingredients Thiamidol and hyaluronic acid form a killer team that reduces hyperpigmentation, leaving skin looking even-toned and radiant. Thiamidol, an ingredient patented to Eucerin, can also prevent the reappearance of dark spots with regular use, while hyaluronic acid attracts and retains moisture from within for results that are visible in just two weeks.

Sarah Chapman Clinic C1 Vitamin C Power 1 Serum

Illuminate your face with this expertly formulated serum from society facialist Sarah Chapman, which treats hyperpigmentation. Two forms of vitamin C work to brighten and boost collagen, while niacinamide helps to even skin tone, and tranexamic acid reduces dark spots and inflammation. Expect a brighter, more refined complexion within a fortnight.

## POLYNUCLEOTIDES

**THE ORIGINAL:** The treatment *du jour* for A-listers. Why? When highly purified nucleic acid derived from salmon or trout sperm is injected into the skin, it targets free radicals, creating the perfect environment for fibroblasts to increase levels of elastin, collagen and hyaluronic acid in the dermis. The skin's surface is instantly hydrated and neutralised of free-radical damage.

**THE MIMIC:** SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic Antioxidant Serum

SkinCeuticals' hero product, this serum protects against environmental aggressors such as harmful UV rays, pollution and metals. Its blend of potent antioxidant ferulic acid and vitamins C and E works to reduce fine lines.

## SKIN BOOSTERS

**THE ORIGINAL:** Want that rich-girl glow? Skin boosters such as Prohilo act like an injectable

moisturiser, delivering hyaluronic acid via needle for a glowy, bouncy appearance, while stimulating collagen and elastin production for a prolonged period of time.

**THE MIMICS:** IMAGE Skincare Ageless Total Pure Hyaluronic 6 Filler

For an instant hydration boost, this concentrated serum contains six forms of higher and lower molecular weight hyaluronic acid that plump and smooth the face. Like Prohilo, it works to increase the hydration of the skin and leave a glowing complexion.

La Roche Posay Hyalu B5 Hyaluronic Acid Serum

With its double-molecular-weight formula, alongside the powerful humectant panthenol, this hyaluronic acid serum is highly effective at drawing moisture to the skin. The dermis is immediately softer, hydrated and plumped, with that sought-after glow. Dermatologist Dr Justine Hextall explains: 'This method really helps to boost barrier function, reducing the penetration of external aggressors such as pollution that will, over time, damage and age our skin.'

MZ Skin Bio-Placenta Hyaluronic Acid Serum

This multilayered serum enhances hydration and skin rejuvenation while boosting elasticity for a healthy, dewy complexion. It contains a complex of four different types of hyaluronic acid, as well as

a vegan bio-engineered placenta, which gives it a real punch, says Dr Maryam Zamani.

## EXOSOME THERAPY

**THE ORIGINAL:** Exosomes are tiny cell-derived messengers that carry powerful regenerative signals. Delivered via microneedling, they encourage cells to repair, ▷



1 C1 Vitamin C Power 1 Serum, £90, SARAH CHAPMAN CLINIC. 2 Ageless Total Pure Hyaluronic 6 Filler, £109, IMAGE SKINCARE. 3 Hyalu B5 Hyaluronic Acid Serum, £45, LA ROCHE POSAY. 4 C E Ferulic Antioxidant Serum, £165, SKINCEUTICALS. 5 Anti-Pigment Dual Serum, £33.75, EUCERIN at boots.com. 6 Bio-Placenta Hyaluronic Acid Serum, £125, MZ SKIN at spacenk.com

◁ rejuvenate and enhance skin quality at a cellular level.

## THE MIMICS: Dr Munir Somji Pro-Active Skincare Signature Serum

Using exosome-derived pure vitamin C from green tangerines, and a blend of vitamins and probiotics, this serum goes into overdrive to fortify the skin barrier, improve cellular communication and promote repair. 'Combined with our drone delivery technology [which infuses the ingredients into the skin], it ensures targeted action – similar to how exosome therapies work,' explains Dr Munir Somji. The result? 'Improved hydration, radiance and resilience of the skin.'

**Dr Ivy Regenerative Exosome Serum**

'Exosomes, when applied regularly, are a continuous biostimulator,

giving our skin the ability to improve the more we apply,' says Dr Ivy. This clever biohacking serum is powered by six million exosomes from centella asiatica leaf vesicles to repair and renew the skin from within, all while reprogramming ageing cells to future-proof your face. In just one week, expect visibly reduced wrinkles and pigmentation, as well as a lifted appearance from boosted collagen production.

## MICRONEEDLING

**THE ORIGINAL:** Fast-track results by penetrating the skin's surface with tiny needles to create microscopic channels that deliver actives deeper and more efficiently. The 'controlled trauma' triggers a natural healing response and prompts the skin to stimulate collagen and elastin.

## Shinso's founder is a Japanese former rocket scientist, so it's no surprise this brand knows how to make an impact

### THE MIMICS: Idenel Revitalizing Nourishing Cream

This next-gen cream contains tiny spicules (microscopic needle-like structures) with peptides bonded to them, which, when rubbed in, penetrate the skin to trigger collagen production and deliver active ingredients that have brightening, plumping and anti-ageing effects. The absorption rate is 60 times greater than if you just applied actives onto the skin. Dr Christine Hall, who brought the 'Korean glass skin' look to the UK, calls it the new alternative to traditional microneedling: 'It's safer, with less downtime and comparable, if not better, results.'

### LAB 31b MicroPeptide Needle Power Treatment Cream

Topical shards of hyaluronic acid (each bottle contains more than 10,000 microscopic needles) are massaged into the skin, warming it and creating optimal channels for the delivery of collagen-boosting PowerPeptide-5. Microneedling in a bottle.

## BOTOX

**THE ORIGINAL:** Small doses of a protein made from Botulinum toxin that can temporarily paralyse muscle are injected into the face to reduce and prevent fine lines and wrinkles.

### THE MIMICS: SkinCeuticals P-Tiox Peptide Serum

Inspired by anti-wrinkle injectables and nicknamed by some doctors 'Botox in a bottle', this has fast become the go-to for aesthetically savvy socialites. Formulated with a neuropeptide complex, it targets nine different types of wrinkles, including crows feet, cheek folds and forehead lines, while PHA, niacinamide and laminaria extract promise a glass-skin complexion.

### 111SKIN Eye Lift Gel NAC Y2

The eye is a delicate region. That's why this powerful gel treads carefully to get the job done with a delicately balanced blend of actives that invigorate, tighten and protect the skin. The inclusion of the cutting-edge peptide acetyl hexapeptide-8, inspired by the science of Botox, reduces muscle contractions, diminishing fine lines in just two weeks for a firmer eye contour.

### Cellcosmet CellEctive CellLift Serum-XT

Hit the rewind button on ageing skin with this supercharged formula. Its concentrated proteins and peptides work overtime to enhance cellular energy production, which decreases with age. Expect an instant tightening effect for smoother and plumped skin, as well as a personalised approach that adjusts to match the skin's physiological age, further addressing specific issues, such as sun exposure, pollution or stress.

## CHEMICAL PEEL

**THE ORIGINAL:** Dull skin, begone! Chemical peels remove the top layer of dull, lacklustre cells in order to bring healthier, glowing skin to the surface.

### THE MIMICS: Teresa Tarmey Lactic Acid Treatment

Celebrity facialist Teresa Tarmey credits her bespoke Lactic Acid Peel as the secret weapon of her signature facials – refined over 25 years – claiming it has 'incredible results'. This at-home treatment is the next best thing, providing a gentle exfoliation that suits all skin types.

### Sisley Paris Exfoliating Enzyme Mask

For a more natural approach, this mask contains the fruit enzyme



1 R (I) Eyes, £65, **TEOXANE**. 2 Revitalizing Nourishing Cream, £165, **IDENEL** at drwassimantakouk.com. 3 Lactic Acid Treatment, £45, **TERESA TARMY**. 4 P-Tiox Peptide Serum, £130, **SKINCEUTICALS**. 5 Eye Lift Gel NAC Y2, £140, **111SKIN**. 6 MicroPeptide Needle Power Treatment Cream, £102, **LAB 31B** at amazon.com. 7 Shinso Glow, £102, **SHINSO** at johnbellcroyden.co.uk. 8 Exfoliating Enzyme Mask, £102, **SISLEY PARIS**. 9 CellEctive CellLift Serum-XT, £775, **CELLCOSMET** at harrods.com. 10 Pro-Active Skincare Signature Serum, £85, **DR MUNIR SOMJI**. 11 Hyaluronic Acid Lip Booster, £44, **PCA SKIN**. 12 Vol.U.Lift, £105, **IMAGE SKINCARE**. 13 Regenerative Exosome Serum, £315, **DR IVY**